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The Shape of Things

THE NEW BRITISH GOVERNMENT FORMED BY Winston Churchill is not without weak points, but it is an immense improvement on its predecessor. The War Cabinet is reduced to five men, all relieved of detailed departmental duties. Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax remain, but they are offset by Clement Attlee and Arthur Greenwood representing the Labor Party, who can be counted on to support a vigorous policy. Neither Attlee nor Greenwood pretends to genius, but they command the confidence of their party, and their appointment gives Labor a real voice in the conduct of the war. A. V. Alexander, outstanding member of the Consumers' Cooperative wing of the Labor Party, goes to the Admiralty, where he served with distinction during the second Labor government. Sir Archibald Sinclair, who has led the small Liberal opposition with energy and ability, becomes Air Minister. The appointment to the War Office of Anthony Eden seems to have excited the Italians, but it fails to stir us. Far more encouraging is the naming of Herbert Morrison as Minister of Supply. He is by far the ablest administrator in the British Labor Party, and he goes to a department badly in need of an efficiency expert.

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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN RUSSIA, WHILE clearly of great importance, are difficult to interpret owing to the severe restrictions under which Moscow correspondents still labor. The release of Marshal Voroshilov from the duties of Commissar of Defense and his appointment as chairman of the Defense Committee of the Council of People's Commissars are said to represent promotion. But on previous occasions the road of advancement has proved, very literally, a dead end for Soviet notables. In this connection it is worth remembering that Voroshilov is the last of the old-line Bolsheviks, a man of independent views with a strong personal following, and about the only remaining Kremlin leader who is not completely a Stalinist yes-man. His successor as head of the Red Army is Marshal Timoshenko, about whom not a great deal is known but who, it now appears, led the Polish and Finnish campaigns. Almost simultaneously with these changes in the high command came news that the system of army political commissars was being abolished. This plan for keeping the Red Army red and discouraging Bonapartism dates back to 1917. Later it was abolished, but after the purge of the generals these "eyes and ears of the Communist Party in the army" reappeared. Now once again the system is discarded as "ossified dogma." Says the *Red Star*, "War does not tolerate dilettantism." In similar vein, the organ of the Red Navy urges stronger discipline and condemns "familiarity and false democratization" between officers and men.

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ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT THE U. S. S. R. IS engaged in some devious and obscure movements. The Russian press and its obedient echoes throughout the world continue to give strong support to Goebbels. But Moscow's current negotiations with Sweden and Yugoslavia seem to aim at results which, under certain circumstances, might prove positively harmful to Germany. Russia is now largely cut off from the outside world and, it is reported, unable to obtain satisfactory deliveries from the Reich. It may hope to buy from Sweden urgently needed machinery, but it will have to pay with the same kind of raw materials that Germany requires, and almost certainly its exportable surplus is insufficient to supply both. Nor is the newly signed commercial treaty with Yugoslavia likely to be popular in Berlin, for it provides for the purchase by Russia of copper, zinc, lead, and lard—all commodities desperately needed in Germany. However, these trade negotiations seem primarily a cover for political talks. There have been a number of indications recently that an attempt was being made to form a neutral bloc in the Balkans under Soviet auspices. The intention, of course, would be to warn off both belligerents, but it is plain that the most immediate threat, particularly to Yugoslavia, comes from the axis powers. The official Russian news agency has denied reports along these lines and bitterly denounced the allegation that the U. S. S. R. was pursuing a pan-Slavic policy. But, it is worth noting, the reports have been based largely on statements in the *Week*, whose

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editor, Claude Cockburn, is associated under another name with the London *Daily Worker,* and is known to have an inside track to the Russian embassy in London.

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THE SPLIT IN THE AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES Union resulted from anti-Communist feeling raised to the boiling-point by the Nazi-Soviet pact. This feeling expressed itself in a resolution, adopted by the National Committee last February, declaring it "inappropriate" for supporters of totalitarian forms of government to be members of the staff or directing bodies of the Civil Liberties Union and specifically including Communists in that category. In accordance with the resolution the one Communist on the Board of Directors, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, was asked to resign. She refused and attacked the Union in the Communist press. Thereupon proceedings were instituted to remove her from the board on grounds of her membership in the Communist Party and her public attacks on the Union. At a hearing held by the board last week the charges against Miss Flynn were sustained against strong minority protests, and her removal was recommended to the National Committee. The intense feeling generated by the controversy has helped to obscure certain important facts. The A. C. L. U. has a perfect right to exclude Communists from its governing bodies; it has, in fact, made a practice of doing so. It was both inconsistent with this practice and unwise to reelect Miss Flynn after she became a member of the Communist Party. But she was reelected, and she has not since been even charged with behavior violating the basic principles of the Union. Since no overt act was involved it should have been possible to delay or avoid the issue rather than precipitate it at a time when popular feeling against all extreme elements is running as high as it is today. The A. C. L. U. will ride out the storm no matter what action the National Committee takes on Miss Flynn's expulsion. But the cause of civil liberties would have been better served if the storm had never been allowed to blow up.

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THE CONSERVATIVE PRESS IS DISMAYED BY the Supreme Court's decision in the Madison Oil Trust case, and its dismay is revealing. For the effect of the decision is to restore vigor to the anti-trust laws and to make it possible for the government to enforce the free competition which the New York *Times* and *Herald Tribune* and papers of similar economic philosophy affect to revere. We say "affect to revere" because their comment—and the reaction in big-business circles generally—discloses the basic insincerity of their everlasting paeans to the competitive system. They have demonstrated again that they do not really want free competition. What they want is the right to stifle competition—without government interference. The oil-trust decision reverses the famous "rule of reason" by which a conservative Supreme Court in 1911 left the Sherman Anti-Trust Act a dead letter, still handy for use against labor unions but impotent to deal with big business combinations. The Supreme Court in 1911 declared that the Sherman Act merely "outlawed" unreasonable restraint of trade, and judges fresh from the practice of corporation law proceeded to decide that a great deal of restraint could still be reasonable. The court now restores the original meaning—the plain meaning—of the Sherman Act's ban on restraint of trade.

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IF WENDELL WILLKIE IS WISE HE WILL MAKE no more speeches defending the holding company. For a striking answer to them will be provided by the trial of Howard C. Hopson and three of his closest associates in the management of the bankrupt Associated Gas and Electric system. The true bill returned by a federal jury in New York alleges that Hopson, Frederick S. Burroughs, his vice-president in charge of finance, and his attorneys conspired to defraud investors of more than $20,000,000. The attorneys are Charles M. Travis and Garrett A. Brownback of Travis, Brownback, and Paxson. Attorneys frequently supply the legal ingenuity that makes holding-company manipulations possible, but it is not often that they are indicted along with the alleged manipulators. These four men, of course, may or may not be guilty. It is sometimes difficult to draw the line in holding-company sleight-of-hand between a profitable cleverness and a clever criminality. Whatever the verdict, the trial will leave the holding company and the devices associated with it discredited in the eyes of the public. It was by means of these devices that Hopson was able to get control of $1,000,000,000 in other people's money with an infinitesimal investment of his own. It was by means of these devices that he made enormous profits from the companies he ran into bankruptcy. For several hundred thousand investors who lost their savings in the course of his manipulations the question whether Hopson and his aides are guilty or innocent in the eyes of the law is interesting but academic.

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"WHITEWASH" WAS THE TERM APPLIED BY Senator Norris, in a four-hour speech in the Senate on May 7, to the Schweinhaut report on the FBI raids in Detroit. "It is well known," Senator Norris said, "that I am one Senator who has great confidence in the ability and courage of our Attorney General. I disagree with his whitewashing of what happened in Detroit. It is painful for me to discuss it and to disagree with one in whom I have such great confidence." The report itself was the subject of an editorial, Sequel to a Melodrama, in last

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week's issue of *The Nation*. Senator Norris, in one of the longest and gravest speeches of his career, declared that he felt "the methods being pursued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation are wrong and, if continued, mean the destruction of human liberty in the United States."

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THE NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD completed its case against the Ford Motor Company by ordering the reinstatement of thirty-eight men discharged from the company's Buffalo plant in 1937 for union activity. Testimony before the board indicated that the type of pressure which was used in the Ford plant at Dallas—described in a recent issue of *The Nation*—was also applied at Buffalo. The company distributed to its employees a statement by Henry Ford himself urging the workers to avoid the unions. It brought in outside thugs in an effort to rid its plants of union men and by terroristic methods effectively prevented unionization. In the face of these facts, the company's protest that the board has infringed its right of free speech loses all meaning. The Labor Board's action represents a last-ditch defense of the minimum rights of collective bargaining, which cannot exist where there is intimidation. Company pressure backed by the use of violence in an open shop is a most obvious form of intimidation.

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THE PRESIDENT IS PREPARING A SPECIAL message to Congress on national defense, which may have been delivered before this issue appears. It is expected that he will call for an immediate additional outlay of about $500,000,000, bringing the 1941 budget for the armed forces above $2,500,000,000. We have no doubt that increased defense preparations are necessary; although our total needs will depend greatly on the outcome of the war and can only be guessed at now. But at this moment we need more than new appropriations. We need non-partisan study of our requirements, our productive capacity, the best organization of our military forces, the use made of money already spent. Hitler is not yet headed for these shores; we have a little time to plan as well as to act. And we shall gain more time for both jobs if meanwhile we send all possible aid to the Allies.

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IN GENERAL THE PULITZER PRIZE AWARDS this year tower over those of previous years. Compare "Grapes of Wrath" with Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings's "The Yearling." Steinbeck's novel is of giant stature beside last year's choice, or the choices for several years back. William Saroyan's play, "The Time of Your Life," may appear less soberly important than Robert E. Sherwood's "Abe Lincoln in Illinois," but it is a work of far greater originality. The history award was uninteresting last year; this year it went to Carl Sandburg's great biography "Abraham Lincoln: The War Years." Nobody will quarrel with the technicality that transferred this work to a category in which it became eligible for a prize; biographies of Lincoln and Washington are specifically excluded from consideration, and Sandburg's volumes imperatively demanded recognition. The biography prize was a disappointment among the other excellent selections. It went to Ray Stannard Baker for the last two volumes of his eight-volume work on Woodrow Wilson. Important as this is as a documentary record, it lacks the qualities of personal interpretation and insight that are usually accepted as marks of biographical excellence. The choice of Mark Van Doren for the poetry award is especially gratifying to *The Nation*, which Mr. Van Doren served for some years as literary editor. Not since Robert Frost won the prize in 1937—as he did also in 1931 and 1924—has so sound a choice been made. In the field of journalism, the selection of Otto D. Tolischus of the New York *Times* is particularly well deserved. His dispatches have been as boldly informative as any from inside the Nazi ramparts.

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IF ARCHIBALD MACLEISH IS RIGHT, THE scholars and writers of our day will answer to some grave indictments when future historians tell the story of the past two decades. Elsewhere in this issue Mr. MacLeish prepares the case for the prosecution: the paralysis of our men of vision in the presence of forces that must spell death to vision; their failure to cure that "condition of men's minds" which induces whole nations "to give up the long labor of liberty and to surrender their wills and their bodies and even their minds to the will of a leader"; their willingness to divide themselves into water-tight compartments of specialization the better to shirk the responsibility of defending the whole of truth and the whole of culture against the enemy. Mr. MacLeish's essay is a challenging, if bitter, document. We hope other scholars and poets will send us their comments.

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JAMES WECHSLER, FOR TWO YEARS A VALUED member of *The Nation's* staff, has accepted a position as assistant labor editor of *PM*, New York's long-heralded, eagerly awaited afternoon newspaper. We are sorry to lose Mr. Wechsler, who in addition to his editorial activities has contributed several of the most striking articles printed in *The Nation* in the last two years, but we cannot repress a certain vicarious satisfaction in his new work. The launching of a newspaper is always an exciting project, but *PM* promises adventures of a wholly unprecedented sort. We intend, in an early issue, to publish a preview of the coming journal.

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Two Worlds at Grips

AMONG the diked fields of Holland and Belgium and in the air above, two worlds are at grips in a struggle more momentous than any of those great battles of the past which earned for the region its description as "the cockpit of Europe." The fight now raging from the Zuyder Zee to the Ardennes will be one of the decisive battles of history. For there is far more at stake than the question whether Germany or Britain shall be top-dog in Europe. Many times in the last thousand years the balance of power on the Continent has shifted, but the foundations of European civilization have been left undisturbed.

Today that civilization is challenged as it has not been challenged since 732 A.D. when the Moslem hordes which had swept through North Africa and Spain were turned back at Tours after they had reached the heart of France. Had this invasion succeeded, the development of Europe would have run a totally different course, but the change would not have been more profound than that which will take place if Hitler is victorious. For the Nazis no longer bother to conceal the fact that they aim to impose their ideology on Europe and make over the Continent on a revolutionary plan. They have ceased to pretend that their only objective is the overthrow of the Versailles system or the reunion of the German people. Now they are talking of a new European union under German leadership which will obliterate "pigmy states" and put an end to "plutocracy," individualism, and democracy.

"The European center of gravity," writes the *Börsenzeitung,* "is returning to its natural center in the median axis of the Continent. Such fundamental reorganization, however, can be effected only if the present order collapses and must be coincident with a landslide that will carry with it middle-sized and small states, assign them to new places, and force them to reorientation or bury them beneath it." In the new Europe, according to Nazi political philosophers, the German master race will reign supreme, assigning to other peoples their rights and duties. A new collective supernational economy, based on an iron discipline and an authoritarian regime, will harness the labor power of inferior races for the benefit of German industry. Naturally, the colonies of Britain and France are to be keyed into this system, and beyond that, as Otto Tolischus points out in an illuminating dispatch to the New York *Times,* the exponents of the German revolution "are convinced that the economic weight of a consolidated Europe alone is too great for the rest of the world to ignore. . . . And since such a Europe would dictate its own terms of economic intercourse, the rest of the world would have to conform by adopting the same methods."

There is no longer room for doubt that the Nazis, if victorious, will pursue their totalitarian vision with the same ruthless efficiency that they are showing on the field of battle. And with the knowledge that defeat means the loss of all national independence and a future of helotry the Western states are now fighting with their backs to the wall. *Il faut en finir.*

The invasion of the Low Countries was clearly a long-planned move, and the excuse that it merely forestalled Allied aggression is hardly worth mention. Holland and Belgium had guarded their neutrality with complete sincerity, and the Dutch under German pressure had even fortified their coast against the possibility of a British attack. In any case, so long as they remained inferior in the air and on land, the Allies had every reason to respect the neutrality of the Low Countries, and that inferiority is an admitted fact. Germany, on the other hand, is now probably at its maximum relative strength. Another year of blockade would have undermined its reserves; another winter of privation would have weakened morale at home. Clearly Hitler has chosen his moment to stake all on one gigantic blow, hoping that the end of summer will see his enemies beaten to their knees. By his dual thrust into Holland and Belgium he seeks to outflank Britain and France simultaneously. Command of the Dutch coast would enable him to undertake smashing aerial attacks on Britain, perhaps paving the way for actual invasion. Control of Belgium would put him in a position to turn the Maginot Line, for the French fortifications which stretch from the Moselle to the sea are weaker than the main sector and lie in flatter and less defensible country.

No one can say what will be the outcome of this battle. The German drive carries immense weight, and the huge Nazi air force, organized with a meticulous attention to detail and utilized with pitiless ingenuity, is a deadly weapon. Against these factors must be set the addition to the Allied ranks of more than a million fresh troops, many of them well trained, and the fact that for the first time German planes are opposed to an enemy in a position to hit back and hit hard. Still more important is the stiffening effect of a sense of imminent peril on British and French morale. In Britain Parliament has spoken with its ancient authority, and Chamberlain has obeyed its voice. He has gone, not so much because the Norwegian expedition was fumbled, as because his lack of drive and real leadership threatened to lose the war as it had lost the peace. Winston Churchill is a man of entirely different caliber, who from the first has understood the nature of the Nazi revolution. He is not likely to underestimate the task before him or to allow a tenderness for vested interests to hinder the full mobilization of British resources. Time no longer permits either half-measures or facile optimism. "We have before us," said Winston Churchill in his first statement to the Commons, "many long months of struggle and suffering. I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears, and sweat."

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The "Daily Worker" Case

THE *Daily Worker,* organ of the Communist Party, and its editor, Clarence Hathaway, have been found guilty of criminal libel by a so-called "blue ribbon" jury. We believe the case merits national attention both because of the circumstances under which it was brought to trial and because of the charge involved. Ever since the Alien and Sedition laws, when Federalist judges brought charges of criminal libel against Jeffersonian editors, the dangers implicit in the practice have been recognized. The charge of criminal libel has a place in our legal system, but its use may easily be abused and the abuses endanger freedom of the press. The general recognition of these dangers explains why there have been so few convictions for criminal libel in the past. The last great case in New York City was when Theodore Roosevelt brought about the indictment of Joseph Pulitzer for criminal libel because of revelations made by the New York *World* in connection with a Panama Canal scandal. But that indictment was quashed by a federal judge—an action sustained by the Supreme Court.

The *Daily Worker* case grew out of an article it published on February 24, 1936, headed "Liggett Murdered by the Underworld for His Scavenging." William C. Dodge, Dewey's predecessor as District Attorney of Manhattan, obtained an indictment for criminal libel against the paper and its editor on December 30, 1936, but news of the indictment brought widespread protest in the press, conservative as well as liberal, and it was pigeonholed. The indictment was recently revived by District Attorney Dewey. It accused the *Daily Worker* and Hathaway of libel on two counts—one libel against the late Walter W. Liggett, the other against his widow. The paper was charged with having published a report that after Liggett's murder in Minneapolis in December, 1935, two Minnesota gangsters testified under oath that he had tried to "shake them down." The second charge against the newspaper alleged that it had said that Liggett's widow had sold her husband's body to the Republican Party. Similar criminal-libel charges were brought by Mrs. Liggett against the Minnesota *Leader,* organ of the Farmer-Labor Party, and its editor at the time, former Congressman Teigan. She demanded retractions. "Mrs. Liggett Demands Retraction. Teigan Stands Pat," was the headline on a Minnesota *Leader* story introduced in evidence at the *Daily Worker* trial. The charges against the *Leader* were never pressed. Later Mrs. Liggett sued the *Daily Worker* for libel and was awarded $2,500.

The Nation is not concerned with the verdict in the civil suit, but the criminal-libel conviction is an entirely different matter. A jury decided not merely whether the matter printed was true but also whether it was "fair comment," a concept open to various interpretations.

It is a pleasure to report that Judge John J. Freschi of the New York Supreme Court handled the case with admirable impartiality and care. But it is hard to understand the verdict in the light of the evidence and of his charge to the jury. "If the jury decides," he said, "that the words contained in the [*Daily Worker*] article did not mean that Mrs. Liggett was literally dismembering the corpse of her husband and selling it limb by limb to the Republican Party, but meant that she was making political capital of her husband's views, then you cannot find any libel of Mrs. Liggett." But the jury did find libel of Mrs. Liggett. Its verdict on that count does not make sense. Nor is the verdict much more impressive on the other. The *Daily Worker,* on appeal, will challenge the class composition of the "blue ribbon" jury panel. Twenty-two per cent of the panel came from New York's famous "silk stocking" Assembly district, none from Harlem or the East Side. The *Worker* will argue that this is of particular importance in a criminal-libel case, since New York in 1805 made the jury the judge of law as well as fact in such actions as a safeguard against the abuses of reactionary judges here and in England. The Scottsboro case was reversed on appeal because no Negroes were on the panel from which the jury was picked. Reversal will be sought on a similar plea—that working-class persons were excluded from the jury. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the case, from the national standpoint, is that it represents another instance—in a growing list—of old charges and indictments being revived for use against Communists. As such it smacks of political persecution and sets a most dangerous precedent.

America Is Not Neutral

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

THE horror and anger that swept through the United States when the first human bombs dropped into Holland were not born of surprise. They sprang from the realization that here at last was the start of the central conflict which would determine the fate of Europe for at least another generation, if not for Hitler's millennium. Americans felt this. And in addition they felt the uncomfortable weight of their own geographical security and their insecurity of mind. Americans are not neutral. They are passionately partisan. They want Hitler defeated. They want Britain and France to survive; the Low Countries to be saved from conquest; the conquered nations to be freed from Nazi tyranny. They want the whole system of fascist regimentation demolished. But so far they have not been willing to assume either risks or responsibilities in order to get what they want. They watch the death grapple in Europe as an audience watches a melodrama, demanding with deep emotion that the villain get his just desserts but comfortably detached

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from the job of seeing that he gets them. This shrinking from any active part in the drama now reaching a climax in Europe is unhealthy, a mood that in the end must create disintegration and division in minds that harbor it; because the detachment is not genuine, corresponding to inner emotions. It fights constantly against conflicting fears and scruples. Americans only pretend to be neutral. The time has come to quit pretense and say clearly just where our hopes lie and what we propose to do to make them real.

Consciously, as a matter of deliberate policy, we should do our best to save France and Britain and their invaded allies from defeat. And the only chance of doing it without ourselves going to war is through providing equipment in unstinted amounts at rates and on terms that will enable the Allies to hold out and to win. In this stage of the war by far the greatest threat to the Allied position is their inferiority in certain crucial weapons—most particularly in planes. It is reported from reliable quarters in Washington that only five out of thirty-odd plants capable of turning out fighting planes are working to fill war orders. If this is true, production should be increased as rapidly as possible.

Nor should we make our terms so onerous that they either hesitate to buy materials of war or deprive themselves of other needed goods—including food for their populations. They still have ample gold and securities—the sequestered funds of the Low Countries increase their available assets—but, as Barnet Nover points out on a later page, they have bought with deliberate restraint in order to stretch their funds as far as they can. If we really believe in the necessity of defeating Hitler and are willing to facilitate his defeat by all possible non-belligerent means, we will give credits as soon as they are required. In the meantime substitute plans, such as Mr. Nover describes, for heavy purchases of needed raw materials from the Allies will tend to lessen the financial drain on their resources by providing additional dollar exchange with which they can buy the supplies they need.

Isolationists argue that increased economic aid, far from insuring us against war, will create an enormous stake in an Allied victory; let it seem in danger of being lost, and we will plunge in to rescue it. The reverse of this argument is closer to the truth; our stake in an Allied victory comes first. It would be foolish to make commitments even in the form of goods and money if we had not already decided that victorious fascism was worse than war. Once that decision is made, the material aid we send serves the opposite purpose; it offers the one chance of saving our stake without fighting for it.

Interventionists support a different contention. If we really feel that the war against fascism in Europe is our war, they say, we have no right to buy our immunity. We should fight side by side with the armies of the Western powers and take the full consequences of our partisanship. This view seems to me unduly romantic. Our troops are not now either wanted or needed on the anti-Nazi fronts. The raising and equipping of an expeditionary force would deflect the stream of military supplies into American arsenals, crippling the Allied armies for months or even years. The very rush of events, paradoxically, makes our participation less likely and less desirable. And even if the argument for military intervention were not fantastic from a practical point of view, it is morally ineffective. The consequences of war are so devastating that no nation has a right to plunge in unless all other means of resistance have failed. It is the tragedy of Europe that peaceful means of resistance were never applied; instead, surrender was tried as a weapon. That is why Europe is at war.

The United States should learn from Europe's failure. We are strong and can choose our own course, neither allowing ourselves to be frightened into retreat nor rushing to arms. The important thing, both for our safety and our integrity, is to acknowledge just where we stand and act accordingly.

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Washington Hears the Guns

BY BARNET NOVER

Washington, May 13

HITLER'S invasion of the Low Countries last week did more than prove that the capacity of Americans to be "shocked and angered," to quote President Roosevelt's words, had not been wholly dulled by the events of the past few years. It brought about an increased measure of support both in and out of Congress for the Administration's foreign policy, a result that may have a real bearing on the election campaign. It dumped a whole series of new problems and new anxieties into the lap of the government. It undermined the opposition to a further large increase in our defense establishment. It narrowed the gap between those who might be called limited isolationists—since their isolationism is limited to Europe and does not apply to Latin America and Asia—and those who favor still greater aid to the Allies, though by measures short of war. And it brought home to a large number of Americans, as not even the invasion of Denmark and Norway had done, the disturbing if elementary fact that opposition to arson does not insure one's house against fire.

Some of these effects will undoubtedly wear off as the surprise and shock of Hitler's latest coup wear off, particularly since it seems unlikely that the German successes in Poland and Norway will be immediately duplicated in Belgium and the Netherlands. Those ardent isolationists whose first reaction to the spread of the war was to give vent to hysterical shouts of "Let's be calm" are already beginning to emerge from the storm cellars in which they took temporary refuge when bombs began dropping on Amsterdam and Brussels. Last week's clamor for a vast increase in the army and navy will probably not subside, for the war in Europe has only just begun, and the impact of that war on the United States is only now really beginning to be felt. But the subject will be given a more realistic examination than was possible in the emotional stress of the past week.

None the less, the secular trend, to borrow a term from the economists, is definitely in the direction of a neutrality that is increasingly benevolent toward the Allies, both as a means of showing disapproval of Hitler's gangster tactics and as a direct safeguard for the United States. The implementation of this attitude, however, will not be easy. For instance, take the problem of credits. Even before the Dutch and Belgian holdings in this country were added to their resources the Allies were in a position to finance all necessary purchases in this country for many months. In line with the late Chamberlain government's fiscal policy of waging the war as economically as possible, purchases have been held down. British and French purchasing agents here have been forced to operate on the assumption that the war would be long and that the Allies could take no chances of having to cut off or drastically to curtail purchases in the United States because of lack of funds. Had the available dollar holdings of the Allies been greater or had Great Britain and France been in a position to get large-scale credits in this country, such parsimony could have been avoided. But both the Johnson Act and the neutrality law stood in the way of credits.

At this late stage in the session, with Congress trying to adjourn in no more than three weeks or a month, it is very unlikely that the question of repealing the Johnson Act or modifying the neutrality law will even be brought up, although Senators King of Utah and Thomas of Oklahoma have come out in favor of immediate extension of credits to the Allies. Action which would have the same effect as lifting the ban on credits but which might not meet so much political opposition is more likely. One plan which has a considerable measure of support in the Department of State and is about to be presented to the President for his approval calls for large-scale purchases from the Allies of a great variety of raw materials, including tin, rubber, tungsten, chromium, and nickel—materials which the Allies, including the Netherlands, are in a position to supply and which, for reasons of national defense as well as for other considerations, it would be wise for the United States to store as emergency reserves. Such a move would avoid the implication inherent in any credit transaction—after what happened to the war debts—that credits are actually subsidies in disguise. With the dollars thus obtained the Allies could make additional purchases of needed supplies, including agricultural products, our surpluses of which are likely to increase as more of this country's European customers are overrun by Hitler and cut off as markets for American products. Indirectly, large-scale purchases by the United States of strategic raw materials, by reducing the available supplies of such commodities, would diminish the chances of their reaching Germany. In other words, such a plan would at one and the same time bolster the Allies' financial structure and therefore their fighting strength, provide the United States with the reserve of strategic raw materials that the army has long insisted should be built up here, reinforce the British blockade, and make possible the continued

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export of American manufactured products and American agricultural surpluses.

The invasion of Holland was immediately followed, somewhat to the embarrassment of the Administration, by the landing of Allied troops in the Netherlands West Indies islands of Curaçao and Aruba, 40 miles from the coast of Venezuela and 750 miles from the Panama Canal. The embarrassment did not arise out of any fear that the occupation would be construed as an infringement of the Monroe Doctrine—it was quickly pointed out that no question of any change in the sovereignty of the islands was involved or could arise—but out of fear that the example set by the Allies might be followed by the Japanese in the Dutch East Indies. To be sure, the French and British governments in announcing their action informed the Department of State that they had done so at the request of the Netherlands government and only as a temporary measure. But account is taken of the possibility that Japan might parallel this action in Southeastern Asia without seeking prior permission.

It is felt here that the danger of such an act of aggression against the Dutch colonies in the Pacific is not imminent. But the government is taking no chances. The Pacific battle fleet is being kept in the Pacific, its actual whereabouts a dark secret, and Secretary Hull has felt called upon twice in one week, the first time before the invasion of the Netherlands and the second time immediately after that event, to emphasize America's interest in the maintenance of the status quo of the Netherlands Indies.

It is feared, however, that the intensification of the fighting in Europe and its possible spread to the Mediterranean might lead Japan into temptation. The invasion of the Netherlands has thus brought the war home to the Americas and created a dangerous situation in Asia. Whatever complacency may have existed in this country about the war in Europe as not "our war" is rapidly disappearing. Nor is any compensatory relief to be had from contemplation of the prospects in this hemisphere should Hitler be victorious. The Latin American nations have taken kindly to President Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy, but it is problematical whether their desire to continue the reasonably happy relations with Uncle Sam would long survive the urge to get on the bandwagon of a victorious Hitler. And the numerous and never disbanded Nazi fifth columns in Mexico and in Central and South America can always be expected to do the job required of them.

How to Invade England

BY EWALD BANSE

[*When Hitler came to power, Ewald Banse was appointed professor of military science at Brunswick Technical College. At the same time, but less openly, he became the prime mover in an organization called the German Society for Military Policy and Military Sciences. He was regarded as the leading exponent of Nazi military aims and technique, and his books "Wehrwissenschaft" and "Raum und Volk im Weltkriege" to an astonishing degree charted the course which Germany's war strategy has taken. The English translation of "Raum und Volk im Weltkriege," from which the following excerpts are taken, was published in this country in 1934 by Harcourt, Brace and Company under the title "Germany Prepares for War."*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

THE German plan of campaign [in 1914] . . . took no, or too little, account of England. It reckoned with the French army and even with England's little expeditionary force, but not with England as the mainstay of a protracted war, the organizer of the blockade which starved us out, the fountain-head of supplies. . . . Our right flank ought not only to have besieged Antwerp—we had plenty of men in Alsace-Lorraine, where they were falling over each other, in fact—but also have made straight for the coast and occupied the Belgian and still more the French Channel ports, the bases of the British expeditionary force, as far as Boulogne or better still Abbéville, which would have been quite easy to do.

Nobody thought of this, because the purely land-minded Germans took no account of the sea and sea power. Indeed, it is a question whether it was not a bad mistake in military geography to content ourselves with marching through Belgium instead of occupying Holland also, equally a neutral and our kinsman to boot. The disadvantage of this proceeding—namely, the fact that it involved a second violation of neutrality—was as nothing compared with the first violation; but the advantage was incalculable, for it would have put the whole opposite coast of England within our range, given our fleet a much longer and stronger base, which would certainly have preserved it from inactivity, and finally made the possibility of an invasion of the southeastern coast of England so immediate that the English, with practically no army, would probably have concluded a reasonable peace with all speed rather than have the

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country overrun by German soldiers. The military occupation of Holland, the home of a race of German traders and peasants, . . . would have presented no difficulties.

It is not too much to say that the World War became an economic war, a war of starvation, and lost the heroic character of earlier wars because the Germans failed to grasp the strategic significance of the coast of Holland, Belgium, and northern France, and made a mess of the Schlieffen plan. We can only hope that more comprehensive thought will some day lead to wiser decisions.

Even from this short survey certain important facts emerge regarding England's position from the point of view of defense. Her situation as an island just off the Atlantic coast of Europe enables her to keep an eye on it and in particular to watch over the Channel and the North Sea; it gives her, in addition, a military security enjoyed by no other country of Europe. Her economic dependence on her own, but distant, empire, which proceeds from this sense of security, is only made feasible by her possession of a big merchant fleet and a navy superior to all others. This fact alone makes England the sworn foe of any power which aims at possessing an equally large fleet. In her case, therefore, the security of the state is bound up with undisturbed maritime trade and a strong navy; none of these things is possible without the others; if but one drops out, the whole structure falls to pieces. Its two main pillars are the navy and, of course, the unswerving determination of the English people. The military upshot of this is that for England the navy is much more important than the army.

The north and west of the interior of Great Britain consist of rough, humpy mountain country of middling height, poor in soil and woods, rich in rain and moorland, and fairly easily passable owing to its many valleys; these two areas, in Scotland and in Wales, are the most thinly populated in the country. The east and south, on the other hand, as also the deepset central depression of Scotland, consists of low-lying country, partly flat and partly undulating, and only intersected by a few modest ranges of hills. This country is the scene of a surviving agricultural and grazing industry, whose products, both animal and vegetable, are few but choice. . . .

Great Britain is easily approached from the sea owing to its many bays and short but deep rivers . . . nor does its interior, apart from Scotland and Wales, present many obstacles to communication. Even the Pennine Chain in the north of England forms no barrier, being merely a sort of raised plateau covered with sheep runs. In general there are three main densely populated industrial (and shipping) areas: (1) the main axle-tree running right across the south of England from London to Cardiff, with its center of gravity in the vast London area; (2) the Midlands, an area bounded roughly by a line joining Liverpool, Birmingham, Hull, and Leeds, and containing rich deposits of coal and iron—the Midlands are the seat of the principal heavy smelting and textile industries of the country, contain a considerable proportion of its population, and are responsible for most of its foreign trade; (3) the small Lowland area in the center of Scotland, with its coal and iron deposits, its shipbuilding and other industries, which contains Glasgow and Edinburgh and almost the whole population of Scotland. . . . Any hostile threat or actual invasion must be aimed at one of these three areas and if possible against the most important one, the Midlands, which are also the principal center for the manufacture of arms.

The southeast of England . . . also deserves special attention, since it is most easily reached from the Continent and as the seat of the capital is of paramount importance politically. Southeastern England forms the northern extremity of the Paris basin, though, of course, now separated from it by the curving-in of the Channel. Consequently, its outer edge from Portsmouth to the neighborhood of the Wash is composed of Jurassic rock which forms either gently undulating depressions or grass-clad downs, toward the west with steep slopes, and is traversed by numerous rivers running lengthwise through it. It is easy to see that this Jurassic belt possesses certain physical features of which an invading army might make good use—with its front facing northwest, that is. The area behind the Jurassic belt is chalk, hard writing chalk in the higher parts, soft green sandstone in the depressions; in the middle of the chalk, however, there is superimposed—just as in the actual Paris basin—a flat tertiary layer, into which the Thames has cut its channel and in the center of which stands London. The chalk country is thus divided into two branches which fork northeast and southeast somewhere between Oxford and Salisbury; their narrow lines of hills, running in these same directions, form a second rampart facing northwest, of practical military importance and further strengthened by various rivers.

In addition to the Thames valley, southeastern England contains one other low-lying area, namely, the broad blunt peninsula formed by Norfolk and Suffolk, a relatively sparsely populated agricultural district. This region is so noticeably cut off from the rest of England, including even the southeast, by the Wash and its inland extension, the Fens (once a swamp, now converted into marshland), by the lower Thames, and by various other rivers, that it is necessarily of the greatest interest to any invading army. In fact, the Great Ouse, which flows into the Wash, and a number of streams flowing into the Blackwater estuary which are only separated from its source by a few miles make the peninsula into a regular island, which provides an invading army with safe and roomy quarters from which it can threaten

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London—which is quite close and without natural defenses on that side—and also the industrial Midlands.

It is very important to form some idea of how the English character may be expected to react to a hostile invasion. The nation will certainly rush to arms as one man and with heroic obstinacy let itself be mown down in front of the line of the Ouse or the chalk and Jurassic hills, before it is forced back step by step. But it is questionable whether the English could face starvation. Physically they have been extremely pampered for centuries and would find it very hard to adjust themselves to real privation such as they never experienced during the war in spite of food cards. Some of them would no doubt patriotically endure even that, but others might throw up the game. . . . We confess that it gives us pleasure to meditate on the destruction that must sooner or later overtake this proud and seemingly invincible nation, and to think that this country, which was last conquered in 1066, will once more obey a foreign master or at any rate have to resign its rich colonial empire. The above sentences would appear monstrous, nay rank blasphemy, to every Englishman and Englishwoman in the world—if they ever saw them.

The Irresponsibles

BY ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

HISTORY, if honest history continues to be written, will have one question to ask of our generation—people like ourselves. It will be asked of the books we have written, the carbon copies of our correspondence, the photographs of our faces, the minutes of our meetings in the famous rooms before the portraits of our spiritual begetters. The question will be this: Why did the scholars and the writers of our generation in this country, witnesses as they were to the destruction of writing and of scholarship in great areas of Europe and to the exile and the imprisonment and murder of men whose crime was scholarship and writing —witnesses also to the rise in their own country of the same destructive forces with the same impulses, the same motives, the same means—why did the scholars and the writers of our generation in America fail to oppose those forces while they could—while there was still time and still place to oppose them with the arms of scholarship and writing?

It is a question the historians will ask with interest—the gentle, detached, not altogether loving interest with which historians have always questioned the impotent spirits of the dead. Young men working in the paper rubbish of our lives, the old journals, the marginal notations, the printed works, will discover—or so they will think—that the scholars and the writers of our generation in this country had been warned of danger as men were rarely warned before. They will discover—or so they will think—that the common inherited culture of the West, by which alone our scholars and our writers lived, had been attacked in other countries with a stated and explicit purpose to destroy. They will discover that the purpose had been realized. They will discover that a similar purpose, backed by similar forces, created by similar conditions, was forming here. And it will seem to them strange—ironical and strange—that the great mass of American scholars and American writers made no effort to defend either themselves or the world by which they lived.

They will make of course the necessary reservations. They will note that societies of scholars and associations of writers adopted resolutions declaring their devotion to civilization. They will note that certain young novelists and poets, the most generous and gallant of their time, unable to endure the outrage and injustice, gave up their lives as writers and enlisted in the hopeless armies to fight brutality with force. But of those who truly faced this danger not with their bodies but with their minds, of those who fought the enemies of the intellect with the weapons of the intellect, of those who fought this danger with the weapons by which this danger could be overcome, they will record the names of very few. And they will ask their question: Why did we, scholars and writers in America in this time, we who had been warned of our danger not only by explicit threats but by explicit action, why did we not fight this danger while the weapons we used best—the weapons of ideas and words —could still be used against it?

It is not a question for which we are altogether unprepared. We have been writing out our answer for many years now in action and inaction, in words and in silence—in learned articles in the scientific journals and in controversial articles in the general magazines, in books, in blank faces after the passionate words, in bored eyes refusing to believe. The answer we have prepared, the answer we have written out for history to find, is the answer Leonardo is said to have given Michelangelo when Michelangelo blamed him for his indifference to the misfortunes of the Florentines. It is the answer of our kind at many other times and places. "Indeed," said

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Leonardo, "indeed, the study of beauty has occupied my whole heart." The study of beauty, of history, of science, has occupied our whole hearts, and the misfortunes of our generation are none of our concern. They are the practical and political concern of practical and political men, but the concern of the scholar, the concern of the artist, is with other, purer, more enduring things.

This is the answer we have written down for history to find. I doubt whether it will satisfy the ironic men who come to plague us on that waterfront where Teresias was made to drink the blood and answer. I think, indeed, it will not satisfy them. For it has not satisfied ourselves. We say with great firmness and authority, speaking by our words and by our silence, that the misfortunes of our generation are economic and political misfortunes from which the scholar can safely hold himself apart. We say this with all the authority of the political scientists of the past, to whom the misfortunes of the people were always political and economic and of no concern to the poet, the pure scholar, the artist intent upon his art. We say it also with the authority of the political scientists of the present, to whom all phenomena of whatever kind are, by hypothesis, economic and political. But though we say it we do not believe it. For we have observed these misfortunes. They have been acted out for us to see. And what we have seen is this: that the misfortunes of our time are not the misfortunes the philosophers, the theorists, the political scientists have described to us. They are not the practical concern of the practical man and therefore matters of indifference to the scholar. On the contrary, it is the practical man and the practical man alone—the man whose only care is for his belly and his roof—who can safely be indifferent to these troubles. The things he lives by are not menaced. And it is precisely the scholar, the poet—the man whose care is for the structures of the intellect, the houses of the mind—whose heart is caught. For it is the scholar's goods which are in danger.

It is perhaps because we have seen this and yet refuse to see it that our minds are so confused and our counsels so bewildered. Nothing is more characteristic of the intellectuals of our generation than their failure to understand what it is that is happening to their world. And nothing explains that failure so precisely as their unwillingness to see what they have seen and to know what they do truly know. They continue to speak of the crisis of their time as though the war in Europe were that crisis—and the war, they say, is no concern of theirs. They continue to speak of the crisis as though the imperialistic maneuvers, the struggles for markets, the propaganda in the newspapers and the radio were the crisis—and the maneuvers of imperialism, the propaganda of the press, and the struggles for trade, they say, are no concern of theirs. And yet they know—they know very well because they have seen—that these things are not the crisis but merely its reflections in the mirrors of action. They know that behind the war, behind the diplomatic gestures, behind the black print on the page and the hysterical voices on the air there is something deeper and more dangerous—more dangerous to *them.* They know that it is a condition of men's minds which has produced these things—a condition which existed and exists not only in Europe but in other parts of the world as well and not least in our own country. And they know that this condition of men's minds is not a practical, a political, phenomenon of no concern to the scholar and the man of thought, but something very different.

It is not, for example, a matter of purely practical and political interest that great numbers of men in various parts of the world wish passionately and even violently to give up the long labor of liberty and to surrender their wills and their bodies and even their minds to the will of a leader, so that they may achieve at least the dignity of order, at least the dignity of obedience. It is not a matter of purely practical and political significance that whole nations of men have gladly and willingly released themselves not only from their rights as individuals but from their duties as individuals; so that they are no longer compelled to feel or to respect the individual humanity of others—or to feel or to respect the things that individual humanity has, over many centuries, created. It is not a matter of purely practical and political importance that governments which once, whatever they may have practiced, protested a respect for learning and the arts, should now permit themselves to show not only the power but, worse, far worse, the *willingness,* the *purpose,* to enslave both learning and the arts. It is not a matter of purely practical and political importance that societies which once made part of the community of Western culture should now attempt by murder and outrage and exile to root out that culture and to replace it with private and parochial sciences and private and parochial arts; so that frontiers are armed, for the first time in the history of the West, not only along the rivers and the mountains and the boundaries of nations, but across the common earth of culture, the free land that was never fenced before.

I think no honest man will say that these are matters of practical and political significance alone. I think any man who considers with coolness and without the preconceptions of the dogmas the character of the crisis of his time will admit that this crisis is in essence a cultural crisis—a revolt of certain classes, certain conditions of men against the inherited culture of the West and against all common culture—a revolt by no means limited to those nations where it has been successful. Wars we have had before—many wars; murder also: inquisition of scholars: torture of askers: suppression and mutilation of truth. But in the past these things have

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been done, however hypocritically, in the name of truth, in the name of humanity—even in the name of God. The forms of culture were preserved—and in the preservation of a civilization as in the preservation of an art the forms are everything. What is new and unexampled in the times we live in is *the repudiation of the forms.* What is new is a cynical brutality which considers moral self-justification unnecessary and therefore—and this is perhaps its worst indecency—dispenses even with the filthy garment of the hypocrite. To use brutality and force, not in the name of right nor in the name of God, but in the name of force alone, is to destroy the self-respect and therefore the dignity of the individual life, without which the existence of art or learning is inconceivable. To lie, not in the name of truth, but in the name of lies, is to destroy the common basis of communication without which a common culture cannot exist and a work of learning or of art becomes unintelligible.

The truth is that the disorder of our time is in its essentials a revolt against the common culture of the West. For against what but the common culture did this disorder continue to struggle in Germany long after it had overthrown the former state? There was no domestic danger for it to fear. Against what but the Western respect for the dignity of the individual was aimed the long series of outrages against the Jews? The Jews were impotent when they were subjected to the worst abuses. Against what but the Western respect for the common, the nationless, creation of the artist was aimed the destruction of the work of men like Thomas Mann? Thomas Mann had already been repudiated by his people when they accepted the government of his enemies. Against what but the Western belief in the wholeness of Western civilization was aimed the assault upon a church which was no longer a danger to any ruler and the fabrication of a paganism which needed only the blond sopranos on the ends of wires to be Wagner at his worst?

Intellectuals in America and elsewhere—writers, scientists, the men of learning—have attempted to ignore these questions. They have pretended to themselves that the burning of books, the exiling of artists, the invention of mythologies were merely incidents, after-thoughts, decorations; that the true crisis was the crisis of food, the crisis of arms, the crisis created by political forces, by economic collapse; that they had, and needed have, no truck with it. They have been wrong. These things are not incidents. They are not after-thoughts. They are the essential nature of the revolution of our age. For without this attack upon the habits of the mind, the reliances of the spirit, the revolution could not, by any possibility, have succeeded.

The revolution of our age—the revolution which has finally emerged and declared itself in action—is not the great Revolution of the Masses of which generous men once dreamed, and which other and less generous men have now so meanly and so bloodily betrayed. The Revolution of the Masses was a revolution which proposed to set up one faith against another faith, one culture against another culture: a faith in man, a faith in the power of the patterns of men's lives, against a faith in institutions and in money; a culture of the people against a culture of the exploiters of the people. The revolution which has finally and successfully emerged in action has no such faith and no such culture.

It is a revolution of negatives, a revolution of despair. It is a revolution created out of misery by dread of yet more misery, a revolution created out of disorder by terror of disorder. It is a revolution of gangs, a revolution *against.* And the enemy it must destroy is the enemy which, in all times and in all civilizations, has stood against the revolutions of the gangs—the rule of moral law, the rule of spiritual authority, the rule of intellectual truth. To establish the negative revolutions, the revolutions of which the only aim is power, the revolutions which have no means but force, it is necessary first to destroy the authority of the unseen sayings of the mind. It is necessary to destroy the things the mind has made. Caliban in the miserable and besotted swamp is the symbol of this revolution. As long as the unseen beauty in the air retains its voices and its seductive music and its stinging whips, the revolutions of the gangs are clumsy, blundering, grotesque, and foolish. They have one hope of success and only one—the destruction of the whole system of ideas, the whole respect for truth, the whole authority of excellence which places law above force, beauty above cruelty, singleness above numbers.

It is the distinction of our time—perhaps unhappily its most memorable distinction—that it and it alone has provided the formula by which this overthrow could be achieved. Only in our time has the revolution of the gangs discovered a strategy and a leadership brutal enough, cynical enough, cunning enough to destroy the entire authority of the inherited culture and thereafter to seal the doors against the searching and the asking of the scholar's mind, the artist's mind; so that the revolution of force, the revolution of despair, could flower and fulfil its possibilities.

It is to this disorder and not to some political and partisan dissension, not to some accidental economic breakdown—it is to this direct, explicit, and intentional attack upon the scholar's world and the scholar's life and the scholar's work that American scholarship has been indifferent. Or if not indifferent, then inactive; merely watchful—fearful, watchful, and inactive. And it is there that history will place its question: How could we sit back as spectators of a war against ourselves?

I think, speaking only of what I have seen myself and heard, I think it is neither lack of courage nor lack

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of wisdom but a different reason which has prevented our generation of intellectuals in this country from acting in its own defense. I think it is the organization of the intellectual life of our time. Specifically, I think it is this: that intellectual responsibility has been divided in our time and by division destroyed. The men of intellectual duty, those who should have been responsible for action, have divided themselves into two castes, two cults—the scholars and the writers. Neither of these accepts responsibility for the common culture or for its defense.

There was a time a century ago, two centuries ago, when men who practiced these professions would have accepted such responsibility without an instant's hesitation. A century ago the professions of the writer and the scholar were united in the single profession of the man of letters, and the man of letters was responsible in everything that touched the mind. He was a man of wholeness of purpose, of singleness of intention, a single intellectual champion, admittedly responsible for the defense of the inherited tradition, avowedly partisan of its practice. Where those who practice these several professions today divide the learned world and the creative world between them in irresponsible and neutral states, the man of letters inhabited both learning and the world of letters like an empire.

He was a man of learning whose learning was employed not for its own sake in a kind of academic narcissism but for the sake of decent living in his time. He was a writer whose writing was used not to mirror an abstract and unrelated present but to illuminate that present by placing it in just relation to its past. He was therefore and necessarily a man who admitted a responsibility for the survival and vitality of the common and accumulated experience of the mind, for this experience was to him the air he breathed, the perspective of his thinking. Learning to him was no plump pigeon carcass to be picked at for his private pleasure and his private fame but a profession practiced for the common good. Writing was not an ornament, a jewel, but a means to ends, a weapon, the most powerful of weapons, a weapon to be used. Whatever threatened learning or the ends of learning challenged the man of letters. Whatever struck at truth or closed off question or defiled an art or violated decency of thinking struck at him. And he struck back with every weapon masters of the word could find to strike with. Milton defending freedom of the mind in sentences which outlive every name of those who struck at freedom, Voltaire displaying naked to the grin of history the tyrants who were great until he made them small, Bartholomew de las Casas gentling cruel priests and brutal captains with the dreadful strokes of truth—las Casas, Milton, and Voltaire were men of letters, men who confessed an obligation to defend the disciplines of thought not in their own but in the general interest.

Had men like these been living in our time, had the intellectuals of our time been whole and loyal, it would, I think, have been impossible for the revolution of the gangs to have succeeded where success has been most dangerous—in the perversion of the judgments of the mind. Murder is not absolved of immorality by committing murder. Murder is absolved of immorality by bringing men to think that murder is not evil. This only the perversion of the mind can bring about. And the perversion of the mind is only possible when those who should be heard in its defense are silent.

They are silent in our time because there are no voices which accept responsibility for speaking. Even the unimaginable indecencies of propaganda, even the corruption of the word itself in Germany and Russia and Spain and elsewhere, even the open triumph of the lie produced no answer such as Voltaire in his generation would have given. And for this reason—that the man who could have been Voltaire, who could have been las Casas, does not live: the man of intellectual *office,* the man of intellectual *calling,* the man who *professes* letters—professes an obligation as a servant of the mind to defend the mind's integrity against every physical power—professes an obligation to defend the labors of the mind and the structures it has created and the means by which it lives, not only privately and safely in his study, not only strictly and securely in the controversies of the learned press, but publicly and at the public risk and danger of his life. He does not exist because the man of letters no longer exists. And the man of letters no longer exists because he has been driven from our world and from our time by the division of his kingdom. The single responsibility, the wholeness of function of the man of letters, has been replaced by the divided function, the mutual antagonism, the isolated irresponsibility of two figures—the scholar and the writer.

Why this substitution has come about—whether because the methods of scientific inquiry, carried over into the humanities, destroyed the loyalties and habits of the mind or for some other reason—I leave to wiser men to say. The point is that there has been a substitution. The country of the man of letters has been divided between his heirs. The country that was once the past and present brought together in the mind is now divided into past on one side, present on the other.

Past is the scholar's country; present is the writer's. The writer sees the present on the faces of the world and leaves the past to rot in its own rubbish. The scholar digs his ivory cellar in the ruins of the past and lets the present sicken as it will. A few exceptions noted here and there—men like Thomas Mann—the gulf between these countries is complete. And the historical novels fashionable at the moment, the vulgarizations of science, the digests of philosophy, only define its depth as a plank across a chasm makes the chasm deeper. That it should

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be necessary to throw such flimsy flights from one side to the other of the learned world shows how deeply and disastrously the split was made.

That scholarship suffers or that writing suffers by the change is not asserted. Scholarship may be more scientific: writing may be purer. Indeed, there are many who believe, and I among them, that the time we live in has produced more first-rate writers than any but the very greatest ages, and there are scholars of a scholarship as hard, as honest, as devoted as any we have known. But excellence of scholarship and writing are not now in question. What matters now is the defense of culture—the defense truly, and in the most literal terms, of civilization as men have known it for the last two thousand years. And there the substitution of the modern scholar-writer, however pure his scholarship, however excellent his writing, is a tragic and immeasurable loss. For neither the modern scholar nor the modern writer admits responsibility for this defense. They assert on the contrary, each in his particular way, an irresponsibility as complete as it is singular.

The irresponsibility of the scholar is the irresponsibility of the scientist upon whose laboratory insulation he has patterned all his work. The scholar in letters has made himself as indifferent to values, as careless of significance, as bored with meanings as the chemist. He is a refugee from consequences, an exile from the responsibilities of moral choice. His words of praise are the laboratory words—objectivity, detachment, dispassion. His pride is to be scientific, neuter, skeptical, detached—superior to final judgment or absolute belief. In his capacity as scholar the modern scholar does not occupy the present. In his capacity as scholar he loves the word—but only the word which entails no judgments, involves no decisions, accomplishes no actions. Where the man of letters of other centuries domesticated the past within the rustling of the present, making it stand among us like the meaning of a statue among trees, the modern scholar in his capacity as scholar leaves the present and returns across the past, where all the men are marble.

It is not for nothing that the modern scholar invented the Ph.D. thesis as his principal contribution to literary form. The Ph.D. thesis is the perfect image of his world. It is work done for the sake of doing work—perfectly conscientious, perfectly laborious, perfectly irresponsible. The modern scholar at his best and worst is both these things—perfectly conscientious, laborious, and competent: perfectly irresponsible for the saving of his world. He remembers how in the Civil Wars in England the scholars, devoted only to their proper tasks, founded the Royal Society. He remembers how through other wars and other dangers the scholars kept the lamp of learning lighted. He does not consider that the scholars then did other things as well as trim the lamp wicks. He does not consider either that the dangers change and can be greater. He has his work to do. He has his book to finish. He hopes the war will not destroy the manuscripts he works with. He is the pure, the perfect type of irresponsibility—the man who acts as though the fire could not burn him because he has no business with the fire. He knows, because he cannot help but know, reading his papers, talking to his friends—he knows this fire has consumed the books, the spirit, everything he lives by, flesh itself, in other countries. He knows this but he will not know. It's not his business. Whose business is it then? He will not answer even that. He has his work to do. He has his book to finish. . . .

The writer's irresponsibility is no less. Where the modern scholar escapes from the adult judgments of the mind by taking the disinterested man of science as his model, the modern writer escapes by imitation of the artist. He practices his writing as a painter does his painting. He thinks as artist, which is to say he thinks without responsibility to anything but truth of feeling. He observes as artist, which is to say that he observes with honesty and truthfulness and without comment. His devotion, as with every honest painter, is devotion to the thing observed, the actual thing, the thing without its consequences or its antecedents, naked of judgment, stripped of causes and effects. The invisible world, the intellectual world, the world of the relation of ideas, the world of judgments, of values, the world in which truth is good and lies are evil—this world has no existence for the honest artist or for the honest writer who takes the artist for his model.

He sees the world as a god sees it—without morality, without care, without judgment. People look like this. People act like that. He shows them looking, acting. It is not his business why they look so, why they act so. It is enough that he should "make them happen." If he concerns himself with motive at all he concerns himself with the "real" motive, meaning the discreditable motive which the actor conceals from himself. His most searching purpose is to find, not the truth of human action, but the low-down, the discreditable explanation which excuses him from care. The suggestion that there are things in the world—ideas, conceptions, ways of thinking—which the writer-artist should defend from attack—the suggestion above all that he was under an obligation to defend the inherited culture—would strike him as ridiculous.

Artists do not save the world. They practice art. They practice it as Goya practiced it among the cannon in Madrid. And if this war is not Napoleon in Spain but something even worse than that? They practice art. Or they put the art aside and take a rifle and go out and fight. But not *as artists*. The artist does not fight. The artist's obligations are obligations to his art. He has no others. Not even when his art itself, his chance to practice

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it, his need to live where it is practiced may be in danger. The writer-artist will write a bloody story about the expense of blood. He will present the face of agony as it has rarely been presented. But not even then will he take the weapon of his words and carry it to the barricades of intellectual warfare, to the storming of belief, the fortifying of conviction where alone this fighting can be won.

There are examples in history of civilizations made impotent by excess of culture. No one, I think, will say of us that we lost our intellectual liberties on this account. But it may well be said, and said with equally ironic emphasis, that the men of thought, the men of learning, in this country were deceived and rendered impotent by the best they knew. To the scholar impartiality, objectivity, detachment were ideal qualities he taught himself laboriously and painfully to acquire. To the writer objectivity and detachment were his writer's pride. Both subjected themselves to inconceivable restraints, endless disciplines to reach these ends. And both succeeded. Both writers and scholars freed themselves of the subjective passions, the emotional preconceptions which color conviction and judgment. Both writers and scholars freed themselves of the personal responsibility associated with personal choice. They emerged free, pure, and single into the antiseptic air of objectivity. And by that sublimation of the mind they prepared the mind's disaster.

If it is a consolation to the philosophers of earlier civilizations to know that they lost the things they loved because of the purity of their devotion, then perhaps this consolation will be ours as well. I doubt that we will profit by it or receive much praise.

From the Bill of Fare

THE NATION has been called cantankerous, a curmudgeon among journals, quick to blame, niggard of praise. Perhaps the charge is true. But when we find a chance to approve we take it, and when we praise we mean it. In this anniversary year *The Nation* decided to institute an award to be given annually for "distinguished service in the cause of American social progress." We submitted a list of candidates—all worthy of choice—to a representative group of American liberals. The selection of Eleanor Roosevelt was a natural and a happy one.

On May 1 *The Nation* awarded a bronze plaque to Mrs. Roosevelt at a dinner in her honor. More than a thousand persons filled the tables and the balcony of the ballroom at the Hotel Astor in New York. Clifton Fadiman served as toastmaster and introduced a list of speakers who managed to combine variety and substance and warmth of feeling in an unusual group of speeches. Mr. Villard reviewed *The Nation's* record, linking its present with its past, and its long-fought-for ideals with the democratic spirit that animates Mrs. Roosevelt. His remarks, both eloquent and comprehensive, were too long to include in these pages. But much of what he said is happily preserved in his article in *The Nation's* special anniversary issue, published last February 10. Some of the other speeches were extemporaneous and so cannot be reproduced, including the words of Eleanor Roosevelt in accepting the medal, and those of William Allen White. Fragments of their speeches, carried in the New York *Times*, are worth quoting:

In a brief acceptance speech, Mrs. Roosevelt said: "I will do my best to do what is right, not with a sense of my own adequacy but with the feeling that this country must go on, that we must keep democracy and must make it mean a reality to more people." She added that "our democracy is only as good as each individual citizen is good," and that a statesman could lead only as far as each citizen allowed him to go.

"We should constantly be reminded of what we owe in return for what we have," she went on, illustrating this remark with two examples, one of a refugee Austrian and another of a taxi driver who had come here as an immigrant, both of whom had "shocked" her into realizing what a debt we owe to our democratic way of life.

"We must remember," she added, "that it is not for ourselves that we live—it is for an ideal; namely, not to give ourselves a better chance, but to give the people as a whole something in life worth living for, and perhaps, sometime, we may offer hope for the rest of the world."

Mr. White said that it was a myth that we were operating under a two-party system, as the liberal Republicans and the conservative Democrats made our system one of four parties.

"It is the illusion of every President on entering the White House," Mr. White said, "that he has a mandate. He believes he has a united party, but the united party is also a myth. By reason of the four-party system the bellyache is an occupational disease of the White House.

"Let us get a Republican President next fall and, boy, will he get a real headache!"

Turning to Mrs. Roosevelt, Mr. White said: "My dear, I don't care if the President runs for the third or fourth term as long as he lets you run the bases, keep the score, and win the game."

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Although the excerpts printed below cannot do full justice to the speeches from which they were taken, we hope they will serve to bring the spirit of the dinner for Eleanor Roosevelt to thousands of *Nation* readers who could not be present.—EDITORS THE NATION.

STUART CHASE

THE story goes that an American tourist was being shown the new subway in Moscow. His guide pointed out the frescoes on the walls, the ticket-choppers' booths, the turnstiles for passengers. After admiring all these, the tourist inquired: "What about the trains?"

Then the guide showed him the new washrooms, more turnstiles, and more frescoes. "What about the trains?" the tourist asked again.

"What about the trains?" the guide repeated angrily. "What about the trains? What about the share-croppers in Alabama?"

This story may be apocryphal, but it illustrates a familiar type of logic. We might reverse it. Suppose we showed a visiting European the Empire State Building in New York, and he inquired: "What about all the vacant space?" "Vacant space?" we might sternly reply. "Vacant space? What about the invasion of Norway?"

I'm as devoted a radio news hound as the next man. Before I accept an evening invitation I consider whether I shall have to miss Raymond Swing—another former *Nation* editor. If both Mr. Swing and Mr. Gunther are on the menu, I refuse to go out at all. But I wonder how much of this interest in the foreign news is excitement—like watching a prize fight—and so a kind of escape from pressing problems at home?

That is what I like about Mrs. Roosevelt—her interest in America. I suppose she worries about Europe like the rest of us, but she does not allow this worry to divert her attention from the home front. She goes around America, looking at America, thinking about America, talking to Americans like those same Alabama share-croppers, helping day and night with the problems of America.

Some of the European news is more breath-taking than the fights, at least to me. I try to picture the shape of the world economy after the war is over—whoever wins—and I'm dumfounded by what I see. Here is Switzerland, said to be spending a million dollars a day to defend its passes. On a per capita basis, read thirteen billions a year for the United States. Compare this with our present supposedly staggering defense expenditures of two billions or so.

If this is the case in Switzerland, it is equally bad in Turkey and the Balkans, worse in Sweden, Holland, Belgium, Italy. That is to say, every so-called neutral in Europe is spending for defense probably twice as much relatively as we are spending for *all* federal purposes.

When we come to belligerents, the figures go right off the map. Recent estimates on the floor of Parliament indicate that Britain is spending more than 50 per cent of its entire national income for war; France and Germany are spending more than 60 per cent. Equivalent expenditures for the United States would be in the neighborhood of thirty-five to forty billions! Even with heavy increases in taxes, this would leave us with an annual deficit of perhaps thirty billions. The present deficits are running around three billions, one-tenth as great. Senator Taft, Mr. Dewey, and the New York *Herald Tribune* have to be revived with smelling salts whenever they contemplate the present gap between federal outgo and income. If we were operating on the European model, could we bring them to at all?

The New Deal is supposed to be fighting a war, too, a war against depression. To do so it has spent between 5 and 10 per cent of the national income—and this in the teeth of the most dire prophecies of inflation, ruin, and grandchildren bowlegged under burdens of debt. Yet the New Deal expenditures have been primarily in the interest of houses rather than howitzers, investments in life rather than in death. Some idle money has been moved, some idle men put to work. But not enough. Our hearts are not in our war. If we taxed some of the idle funds more heavily, we could put men to work and come closer to a balanced budget. But we don't dare to. Many of us just howl about approaching bankruptcy. Mr. Dewey talks about economy in the cadences of President McKinley. It sounds poignant as one listens, but then one looks east toward Europe, or even north toward Canada, and it all seems pretty timid and childish and irrelevant. It isn't that kind of world any more.

What kind of world it is going to be I don't pretend to know. Perhaps after the shooting stops we shall find that the financial folklore of three centuries has been reversed, and that a new calculus has emerged, where men come first and money comes second. Maybe when a thing is to be done, the question will no longer be: "Where's the money coming from?" but rather: "Have we the men and the raw materials? If we have, we can do it." That at least seems to be the drift in Europe, so far as I can glimpse it through the fog.

I am glad that we have *The Nation* with us at this time. It has pierced a lot of fog in the last seventy-five years. It is comforting to know it is here to help us pierce this one. We need all the help we can get.

JOHN GUNTHER

I HAVE a rather bad habit of neglecting the newspapers every once in a while, and reading other things. Sometimes I even read the dictionary. And when I was thinking about this dinner a few hours ago, I looked up a word in my dictionary—the word "institution." What *is* an institution? I wondered. And I found out that an institution was something that had fixity, permanence, and importance. Also it's something that people like to depend on, something benevolent as a rule, something we like. And it occurred to me that tonight we are meeting together to honor *two* great American institutions: *The Nation* and Eleanor Roosevelt. Of Mrs. Roosevelt I can say very little, except to mention how deeply we all admire her. But of *The Nation* I can say a good deal. I observe several *Nation* editors looking somewhat alarmed.

Ten or eleven years ago, I remember—it must have been 1930 or thereabouts—I started to write European articles for *The Nation*. I lived in Vienna then. And I've been thinking, tonight, what a formidable, what a spectacular difference there is between the Europe we knew then, in 1930, and the blazing Europe we face today. (I've been looking over some of my old *Nation* pieces. They were about petty revolutionary

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movements in Rumania; they dealt with changes in the political picture in Austria which no one but an Austrian metaphysician could understand; they described what was almost a comic-opera world.) We had scarcely ever heard of Hitler in those days; if we had heard of him at all, we thought he was a rather bad Austrian joke. We thought that Mussolini, basically, was of the organ-grinder type, who made trains run on time and chased beggars off the streets. We thought of Stalin as a faithful student—or shall I say disciple—of Lenin, who would no more gobble Finns than we'd gobble grasshoppers.

In those days Mr. Chamberlain was a faintly adequate Birmingham back-bencher. General Franco was an ambitious officer somewhere in Morocco. Daladier and Reynaud were doing what all French politicians do when they're obscure—I'm not sure what that is. In those days we had never heard of the anti-Comintern pact, or the Russo-German pact, or the Siegfried Line, or the Rome-Berlin axis, or who was going to get axed by that axis. In those days we even thought there was a League of Nations. We didn't know nearly so much as we do now of the modern technique of rape and run. And if anybody had bet that ten years later the British and Germans would be fighting in Norway, with the British in the gravest possible danger, we would have called an ambulance.

It's part of the duty of serious journalism to portray changes like this, changes that have shattered the very foundations of our modern world. And it has always seemed to me that *The Nation* has performed able and very honorable work in doing so. The essence of foreign correspondence, it seems to me, is stability of judgment, plus courage. It isn't easy to work in Europe these days. There are obstacles on every side. I don't mean merely such obstacles as censorship or propaganda, which are more or less external and which can be overcome. I mean such internal obstacles as inadequate education, and prejudice, and above all the great national vice of wishful thinking. Also nowadays good reporters—like the reporters on *The Nation*—have to face the almost intolerably complex difficulties of the world itself. A good reporter has to be something like Dr. Freud, since he must be a psychologist; he must be something like Gibbon, since he is necessarily a historian; he ought to be like Max Planck, a scientist; he is like Dr. Gallup, a sounder-out of opinion; he certainly must be a politician; he may even have to be a prophet. For it's not merely a war that is going on today; it's a revolution. The world is exploding in an unpredictable series of violent uprisings and outreachings. And at such a period in history it behooves men of good-will to know what is going on. And thus journalism—the kind of journalism represented by *The Nation*—is so critically important.

MELVYN DOUGLAS

THERE is much rabble-rousing today under the slogans of liberalism and democracy. These slogans are the verbal banners flown by organizations and individuals whose ideologies are as far apart as Herbert Hoover and Earl Browder. The resulting tension is particularly evident in California. The extreme right and the extreme left seem to regard the state as a testing ground. Both sides grapple for control in their efforts to influence the voting public. It requires some measure of insight to gauge these organizations and to determine what purposes lie behind the liberal verbiage. A magazine like *The Nation* is of extreme value to us in California. It is often difficult to obtain a fair hearing for facts, as, for instance, in the case of California's migrants, and *The Nation* has been a periodical which could be depended upon to present them from a completely trustworthy and liberal point of view. At the age of seventy-five years its liberality is still sound and militant.

So too is the liberality of Eleanor Roosevelt. Very recently, during a tour of California's migrant camps, I had an excellent opportunity to see Mrs. Roosevelt in action. She knew precisely what questions to ask in order to get the information she wanted. Her eye was quick to catch the fact that the single water faucet serving a county camp was right next to the privy or that the sores covering a child's body were the result of improper food. Much more impressive, however, than her obviously trained aptitude in social research were the simplicity and warmth of her approach. Underneath the scientific observer was the human being who was profoundly vulnerable to the sufferings of thousands of her fellow-citizens.

An incident or two will illustrate. We were in one of the county camps. Mrs. Roosevelt noticed a young woman standing inside a tent pitched on the bare ground, which was still slushy from a heavy rain storm the night before. The young woman was surrounded by several children. Mrs. Roosevelt, without waiting for the formality of a presentation, stepped to the flap of the tent and asked if she might come in to look around. The woman said, "Why certainly, but we haven't had a chance to clean up yet from last night's flood and a mess of measles." Without further ado, Eleanor Roosevelt was inside the tent talking to her about the perennial problems of housekeeping and child-raising. She might for all the world have been an Oklahoma neighbor who had just landed in California, and the young Oklahoma woman must subconsciously have felt this, for not once during the whole encounter did she stop brushing her hair to make any silly obeisance to the wife of the President. There was a quiet dignity about both of them.

The functioning of Mrs. Roosevelt as a citizen sets a vivid example. It points the way for liberals. It provides a basis for hoping that the day may come when national and international legislation will be built upon the human needs of all men, women, and children rather than upon the purposes and ambitions of a few.

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

THERE have been, off and on through the centuries, many attempts to "emancipate" women. These attempts were focused in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as in a burning glass, till the fire was lighted which finally, some twenty years ago, gave women political equality. But while this struggle was going on, people of wisdom were beginning to see that political freedom is only the most obvious of the freedoms which a human being needs if he is to draw his breath in the calm of real liberty. Exactly as cramping and far harder to see and to break than political slavery is the invisible, intangible slavery of subjection to habit and

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social standards. Women found themselves with the right to cast a vote, but with hardly more freedom to be themselves than before—unless in the role of rebels against society. In that role freedom can always be secured, but at a price few normal human beings are willing to pay.

At this point, a critical one, Eleanor Roosevelt appeared on the American scene and began being herself, out in the open, where folks could see the process. If there ever was a case of the need producing the person, this was one! Here was a woman-citizen such as myriad American women had longed to be, deeply interested in her home, on excellent terms with her husband, but also burning with pity, with remorse, for the undeserved sufferings of the under-dog in our society. She not only stood staunchly by those members of the younger generation related to her by blood; she offered that innately decent responsibility of the mature for the young to all younger Americans. She extended the feeling of responsibility for the misfortunes of neighbors to others than the ones who happened to live in her geographical neighborhood.

The emancipation of the better qualities of American women accomplished by the example—not the exhortation—of Eleanor Roosevelt is beyond calculation. What she has done is to help American women to see life in its true proportions. She has shown that there is time in a woman's life for her duties to her personal circle as wife, mother, and grandmother, and to her country as citizen, with enough left over for enjoyment. She has proved, as Christian in "Pilgrim's Progress" proved long ago, that the lions in the way of progress are really chained to their places and incapable of harming those with the courage to walk straight forward.

FERDINAND PECORA

WHEN *The Nation* was founded in 1865, our country was entering upon the unhappy reconstruction era which followed the Civil War. Today America is facing another reconstruction period—one which presents problems far more profound than those of the post-Civil War decade. The correct answers to the questions confronting us cannot be found by recourse solely to the old formulas. Painful experiences of recent years teach us that many of them now fail to work; that they are no longer adapted to the vast changes which modern developments have wrought in industry, agriculture, finance, and commerce, or to the bewildering shifts in international relationships and contentions.

Inevitably, the soundness of decisions that we must make upon these grave issues will depend upon our ability to recognize and understand the complicated forces which swirl around us. This demands imperatively that we have a free, a fearless, and an honest press, a press keen and alert to see the truth and courageous enough to proclaim it, especially when it conflicts with a prevalent public opinion.

Those are the qualities which *The Nation* has exemplified throughout its notable career. And so, on this felicitous observance of its diamond jubilee, in congratulating *The Nation* upon its many years of exceptionally useful life, I cordially wish for it a constantly spreading influence upon the mind of America.

As for our beloved guest, her varied and ceaseless labors for the social betterment of our people have constituted her, *in fact,* our First Lady. Of her it may truly be said that she has always sought, not honors for herself, but to render devoted service to others. No wonder, then, that honors richly earned have been heaped upon her despite the natural modesty of her nature. One of these is that which we delight in conferring on her tonight—as the first recipient of *The Nation's* award—for her outstanding achievements in the field of social progress and for upholding so tirelessly the precious principles of our democracy.

FRANK KINGDON

FIRST, let me speak a fitting word of gratitude that *The Nation* has lived for seventy-five years. And second, let me say how greatly I wonder that it has. For one of the paradoxes of our American life is that those who most loudly profess their faith in rugged individualism are the ones who submit most docilely to close-knit organizations, while those who advocate social planning and social control are usually extreme individualists ready at the drop of a hat to tilt their furious pens at each other in orgies of dialectical immolation. Social nonconformity has seldom assumed the dimensions of a mass movement among us, but has made its history in a series of brilliant guerrilla campaigns fired by crusading and highly personal zeal. Yet through these apparently disconnected sorties and affrays a threat of essential congruity has run, and *The Nation* has been the consistent organ of its expression.

As an advocate of nonconformity *The Nation* is fittingly paying honor to Mrs. Roosevelt, a woman who in her time plays many parts, not the least striking of which is that of a breaker of precedents. Yet of all innovators she is the most disarming, for she insists on no originality save that of being herself. Among all her remarkable achievements I count as supreme the kind of person she has become. She has lived after her own fashion, and has proved herself so genuine a human being that few will dispute the statement that today she is the most widely beloved person in our whole national life.

In his most recent book, "Freedom and Culture," John Dewey has two sentences that stay by me almost hauntingly: "We have advanced far enough to realize that democracy is a way of life. We have yet to realize that it is a way of personal life, and one which provides a moral standard for personal conduct." What Dewey asserts, Mrs. Roosevelt exemplifies. And the result is more than a general human kindness. It attains the quality of high statesmanship.

For example, we are being confronted by masses of people torn from the soil in which their roots have been deeply driven for centuries and turned out on the highways of an inhospitable world. Some with little understanding turn away from contemplating what is happening, even feel a resentment that anyone should suggest that they have any responsibility in the matter. But to one who sees in every event the actual human beings involved, the bitter toll of chauvinism and aggression becomes something more packed with meaning than any cold statistics can display. The victims are not Finnish refugees or Polish or Czech or Jewish or Christian

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refugees, they are men and women and children hunted along cruel and bloody roads, going they know not whither, fleeing from terrors they dare not name, homeless, frightened, and without hope. Here is a picture far more disconsolate than our ordinary categories of pity and philanthropy. Seeing it with clear eyes, our honored guest belongs with those who have never let us forget the aching chaos of these hearts for whom the world has been transformed into catastrophe.

Those who answer that this is sentiment and not reality do not know the depths at which it moves. These stricken ones are symptoms of political realities of almost immeasurable magnitude. We are witnessing a kind of selective migration that is arbitrarily upsetting the equilibrium of populations established over centuries. In the presence of such a spectacle only those who feel the human pang are sensitive enough to understand the implications for our whole society. To see the refugees clearly is to recognize that their very helplessness is the indication that they are tossed by forces of revolutionary upheaval that threaten to topple our whole vaunted structure of civilization.

The creed of this contemporary revolution is nihilism. It is the great denial—denial of human rights, denial of human brotherhood, denial of human dignity, denial of the ultimate reality of life itself. It is the passion to crush and to kill. We are met here to acclaim a woman and a journal that have never ceased to proclaim the great affirmation—that life can be good, that every man, woman, and child has worth and dignity, that all human beings are one in ultimate destiny and in striving faith, that out of hope and effort the good society shall yet be born.

In the Wind

PROBABLY NO one knows the real story, but this tale of the President's intended convention strategy comes from a frequent White House visitor: F. D. R. wants Attorney General Jackson to head the ticket and will say so. If that arouses no cheers, he will press for Supreme Court Justice Douglas. Those two, this source insists, are the only men he regards as real successors. If they are rejected, he will run himself.

THE EXPECTED revival of Christian Front activity on New York streets is getting under way slowly. A few meetings are being held, and Joe McWilliams has launched a new "front" called the United Party. But it is said that most of the Front groups are awaiting the outcome of the Brooklyn trial before starting "war in earnest."

THE COMING convention of the Newspaper Guild will witness an organized attack on the present administration. The offensive is being prepared by Ferdinand Lundberg and is apparently deriving support not only in New York but in cities outside as well. The convention will be held in July.

"I AM NAIVE enough to believe," Donald J. Sterling, president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, told that body recently, "that a newspaper must have a soul, a realization that its power and influence come, not from any pressure or dictation exerted by it, but from an everyday practice of fair play." Sterling is managing editor of the Portland (Oregon) *Journal*. Shortly after this speech Senator Norris sent word to public-power advocates in Portland that he favored a public-ownership proposal on the city's municipal ballot. The *Journal's* rival, the *Oregonian,* reported Norris's announcement in a long story. The *Journal* ignored it—except for an editorial several days later denouncing Norris.

PROPAGANDA DEPARTMENT: "Time should be engaged on the air for martial music and patriotic programs to overcome the apathy that makes Hitler and Stalin—and the people of the United States, too—think Canadians don't care."—Editorial in the Toronto *Globe and Mail.*

WAR NEWS: The *Radio Daily* recently ran this ad: "War Names. Now available, authentic, phonetic pronunciation list of every important city, railway center, river, and mountain in Norway.—$2. War Name Service, 110 West Forty-second Street. (Orders taken for Sweden, Denmark, and the Balkans)."

WHILE RICHARD WRIGHT'S "Native Son" has been receiving nation-wide acclaim, Communist ranks are sorely divided over the book, and debate is taking place both in private and in public. One group condemns the book on the ground that it will damage both Negroes and the C. P.; another—which seems to be dominant—is vigorously defending it. Wright is a party member—a fact which most reviews did not reveal.

THE SENSATIONAL NLRB hearings in Dallas on Ford terrorism received almost as little publicity in that city as in the rest of the country. . . . Joseph Lash, former Student Union leader, is preparing an authorized compilation of Franklin D. Roosevelt's addresses, designed to show that they reveal a consistent philosophy. . . . Nazi propaganda here is now concentrating on India.

WILLIAM HILLMAN, NBC's London reporter, made a slip over WEAF that is not likely to endear him to Italian audiences. Citing an item in *Popolo d'Italia,* he identified that journal as "Mussolini's mouth organ" and had to explain a little later that he meant "mouthpiece."

ANDRE MARTY, cabling from Moscow to the New York *Sunday Worker,* bewails the fact that "the monstrous imperialists are at one another's throats and are preparing to tear one another to pieces." When it comes to specific examples M. Marty says nothing of the Nazi assaults on Denmark, Norway, and the Low Countries, but he sadly points out that "already the Lofoten Islands and Iceland are 'under the protection' of Chamberlain, and tomorrow Greenland will be 'under Roosevelt's protection.'"

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

A SAINT on earth died the other day, a man really too good for this kind of world. Of course I refer to George Lansbury, perhaps next to Gandhi the most outstanding pacifist in public life anywhere. I suppose that death was not unwelcome to him. At least he may not have wanted to carry on now in enfeebled health in a world which is so deliberately bent on self-destruction and will not read the simple and plain lesson of its war folly. It is only two years since he personally went on a mission of good-will to Hitler, Mussolini, and the heads of the French and other governments; I do not remember whether he got to Stalin or not. Yes, even Hitler received this benign and kindly old man, though Germans have been condemned to a lifetime of servitude merely for holding to Lansbury's Christian belief that the Commandment "Thou Shalt Not Kill" applies to all times and all conditions. When I was in England last fall he was apart from the great currents of life in his country, all of which, except a small group similarly conscientiously opposed, stood behind the government in its belief that Germany can be purged of Nazism by guns and unlimited bloodshed. But he died as true to his faith as ever did a Christian martyr.

"Member of Church of England; teetotaler; non-smoker; twice in prison"—thus Lansbury described himself in "Who's Who." He went through fire during the last war years, in and out of prison, but he was one of those men whom prison could not mar or break. Once when he was on a hunger strike in jail, he wrote, a prison chaplain rebuked him "for injuring my body by voluntary starvation because it was the temple of the Holy Ghost." At once Lansbury asked him if he were a Protestant. The chaplain said that he was, whereupon Lansbury replied: "If it had not been for Latimer and Ridley allowing their temple of the Holy Ghost to be burned in defense of their faith you could not have been a Protestant at all. You would not have come into my cell to talk this nonsense to me." But not his religion or anything else could dim his sense of humor; he recalled in his Memoirs the joyous interruption "shouted at canvassers for a school-board candidate who was in favor of secular education: 'They want to rob us of our bloody religion.'" This reminds me of what Augustine Birrell once said—that "the trouble with Lansbury is that he *will* let his bleeding heart run away with his bloody head."

None the less, however much his heart ran away with his head, he was, as was once pointed out in the London *New Statesman and Nation*, "immensely shrewd in practical affairs, and a most astute political fighter." Yet he would not remain at the head of the British Labor Party when it plumped for the sanctions against Italy in connection with the invasion of Ethiopia because he thought that would be inconsistent with his devotion to the doctrine of non-violence. Nobody hooted or sneered at him when he took this position, not even the most dyed-in-the-wool reactionary Conservative. Everybody respected and honored him, and the *New Statesman and Nation* spoke the truth when it declared that "George Lansbury is the only name that is known in every town and village of Great Britain." He was so simple, straightforward, and lovable, so completely uninterested in what happened to George Lansbury, so unwilling to conceal his lack of boyhood education, his humble origin, and his years of working as an ordinary laborer that one naturally thought of him as the "purest Christian in all England."

How few examples we have had of men who were willing to sacrifice the prestige of high office and a good salary by putting conscience above preferment! Too many like Ramsay MacDonald have salved their conscience by convincing themselves that they were indispensable, that they must not leave their party in the lurch in time of national crisis. Moreover, in Lansbury's case he knew that he had to turn the party leadership over to a man who was not so able; Clement Attlee is today nothing like the leader His Majesty's Opposition should have when the nation, as Winston Churchill has just admitted, is in greater danger than ever before. But Lansbury's intellectual honesty was crystal clear. So he gave up the leadership at seventy-six, without recrimination, without bitterness, without a sign of self-pity.

Afterward he went on as full of the zest of life and as certain of the correctness of his doctrines as Gandhi himself. How can such men as these be downcast? They have only to look around to see in a crumbling world about them the justification of all they have taught and preached. True, the militarists and believers in force are on top. And more and more people, even in our own country, are ready to put their faith in armaments, believing that if a nation only has enough arms, even if it is driven to the point of bankruptcy, it is safe. The world is giving that theory its final test now. Is it any wonder that an American general said to me that no country is now rich enough or big enough to support the soldier?

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Notes by the Way

AT FIRST I felt that it was a little inappropriate for a Westerner to be reviewing a book by a Southerner about New England ("A Southerner Discovers New England." By Jonathan Daniels. The Macmillan Company, $3); but then I reflected that it was New Englander and Southerner who discovered the West, if not the Westerner, and so there was justification after all. Joseph Smith saw his visions and dug up his golden plates in upper New York State; Brigham Young had his hardheadedness from Vermont; many a Southerner fled from the ruins of sixty-one to sixty-five to the wide freedom of the cattle ranges. I know little towns in Utah with red brick houses set back on quiet lawns and bushed by dim purple lilacs which always puzzled me because in the light of the new mountain sun they looked older than they could be. It was not until I had discovered New England and the South, after a fashion, that I realized that they *were* older than they could, at first thought, be, because they had been made by men and women who remembered New England and the South, often by way of the Middle West and more than one generation.

Regionalism, like nationalism, can be bitter and narrow and fanatical when it gets mixed up with politics and economics; but the regionalism which makes Mr. Daniels publish himself a Southerner is of a quite different stripe, though he too discusses both politics and economics. In "Of Thee I Sing" Victor Moore was made to say, "In Kansas we don't understand New Yorkers, but we don't want to shoot 'em." Jonathan Daniels went to New England not only not to shoot Yankees but to understand them, and add another dimension to his regionalism.

"This journey," he says, "needed to be made." He goes on to say:

> The whole procession of the American years has been illumined—or at least inflamed—with the works of men who hastened from the North to describe the South. Unfortunately there has been scarcely any perceptible movement from the opposite direction. . . . Whatever the cause, New England was denied the corrective influences which she so steadily furnished the South.

But Mr. Daniels, for all his frankness, is an amiable avenger. His regionalism is a flavor and not a frenzy, a unifying, not a separating, element, and the reader gets from his book, not only a more revealing picture of New England than a New Englander might draw, but a conviction that only by a combination of their regional virtues can the North and South—and the West as well—defeat the regional vices that beset them. This is an old thesis, but it can bear reiteration.

Mr. Daniels's book is packed with information—he is an excellent and conscientious reporter—about the land that begins at the Merritt Parkway and ends at the top of that enormous county called Aroostook; but the South is in it, too, for contrast and commentary. Closed mills in New England speak to him of low wages in the South; New England's ubiquitous public education, of Southern illiteracy. He plays upon the irony of New England financiers bemoaning the flight of industry—and financing the flight because money must earn its interest, and then financing relief in the gutted mill towns. He tells the tragic story of the fall of Manchester under the heading of Money or Men. He does not spare the glory of Yale rising out of the New Haven slums in an excellent chapter entitled Shadow Under a Torch.

There is shrewdness in Mr. Daniels's book worthy of a New Englander; there is also gallantry—though he scorns the word—and for good measure a style compounded of intelligence, imagination, and skill. The spirit of the whole is contained in his last sentences, in which he postulates a

> destination in decency which will include North and South together. . . . The Yankees once fought a war upon the sensible proposition that this could not be one nation, half slave and half free. They were right, and they proved it. But neither can this nation be half rich and half poor. With a sharp stick behind us, uncertain and undirected in the South, we are fighting about that now. And I count it that the sensible Yankees will be on our side. This time we shall all win or lose together.

MARGARET MARSHALL

The Aviation Industry

THE AVIATION BUSINESS: FROM KITTY HAWK TO WALL STREET. By Elsbeth E. Freudenthal. The Vanguard Press. $3.

IT IS a relief to pick up a book which is a relentless critique of an industry and to find that it is without any of the faults of the sensational muckraking job. Miss Freudenthal has given us a careful, accurate, and objective study of the development of the airplane business. Long a security analyst, with Wall Street experience, she devotes little space to the invention and technical progress of the airplane; rather she traces the rise of the business of manufacturing planes for war and peace and of operating them for civilian purposes. For this task her experience has well fitted her. She rehearses, of course, the shameful evils that have marked the development of this new industry by the good old competitive capitalist system, but she has largely controlled her adjectives and emotions in order to let the facts speak for themselves.

They are bad enough. Here is again the record of the wartime scandals with which, it is to be feared, the oncoming generation is unfamiliar: that we spent one billion dollars during the war to end war in our effort to supply the A. E. F. with planes and delivered only 196 "flaming coffins." Naturally Miss Freudenthal has not been able to add anything new to a record which was factually and officially established by Charles E. Hughes, now Chief Justice of the United States. It was he who recommended that the arch-offender, who is still a figure in the aviation business and still a director of the National City Bank of New York, be tried by court

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martial for conduct which Mr. Hughes and the Attorney General of the United States defined as "inexcusable," "censurable," and "reprehensible"—he was saved by that noble reformer, Newton D. Baker. The truth is that the army turned over the matter of obtaining airplanes to the big men in the aviation business, who found it impossible either to be efficient or to separate wholly their private business from that of the government.

The next phase of aviation development was that of flying high in Wall Street. Never was there a clearer case of private enterprise mulcting the public, which eagerly snapped up the stock because of the fabulous profits made by the insiders—profits wholly unwarranted by the business or its prospects. Thus, the son of the gentleman Mr. Hughes desired to court martial made an investment of $40 which three years later stood him in at a beggarly $5,500,000. Miss Freudenthal's account of the aviation industry's swinish picking of the public's pockets in Wall Street ought to be read once a month by some of our big business men who make the welkin ring with their denunciation of the New Deal. It was unbelievable overcharging and gouging by our aviation patriots which led Mr. Farley and President Roosevelt to cancel the airmail contracts. This Miss Freudenthal entirely upholds.

Several of her chapters are especially timely, notably those dealing with the international aspects of the aviation business—including interlocking directorates and the sale of American rights and inventions abroad—the present greatly expanded set-up of the companies, and our own air imperialism. No one else, I think, has covered as fully the rise of Pan-American Airways to its present monopoly of all our foreign airlines or set forth as clearly how Pan-American has been developed by government subsidies as an instrument of national policy—for extending American influence in South America, for thumbing our nose at the Japanese in the Pacific, for drumming up trade everywhere. Fortunately, since her book went to press, the Civil Aeronautics Authority has given permission to the American Export Airlines to set up a rival air service.

But the menace of interlocking directorates, of the international air-armament business, remains unchecked. We have even granted to German companies the right to manufacture American-invented airplane engines, with which they are now warring on the Allies. Our great Douglas Company and four others have had no hesitation in taking Japanese money and have licensed the Japanese to make certain aircraft or other aeronautical products now used in the destruction of China. Think of a business which actually dreads peace and anything that may lead to the establishment of a sane world order! It is not, however, because of this that Miss Freudenthal favors nationalization of the industry but because she thinks the government and its army and navy should be "masters in their own house." Private management will, she says, "pursue its own ends—profits first," regardless of quality. "The only effective method of controlling this vital arm of defense," she adds, "is through nationalization." The industry should be "developed primarily for the good of the country, not as a financial toy."

Altogether this book is a storehouse of absolutely necessary accurate information. I have but two criticisms to offer. The book could stand stylistic revision, and Miss Freudenthal

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would have strengthened her case against the business by recording more fully the extraordinary record of efficiency and technical progress of the present operating companies.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Guidebook to Literature

PREFACE TO WORLD LITERATURE. By Albert Guérard. Henry Holt and Company. $3.50.

THE English would call this "a middle-brow book." Written for the average adult reader, with charm, in an open style, it has a kind of textbook character; but its summaries are pleasantly planned and its appendices informal. The subject of "world literature"—actually the literature of the Western World—is removed from the dryness of the full scholarly approach and served forth with good sense and good nature and without overt or concealed bigotry. Dr. Guérard has profited from the liberal tendencies in modern scholarship. He explains that there are no stiff lines between "literary periods"; and that the forms of literature, "the *genres*," sometimes merge and coalesce with one another. He avoids simplifying into what Stephen Potter calls "the academic sandwich: classic-romantic-classic"; and has sound and interesting things to say on taste, false and would-be popular art ("kitsch"), the "social approach" to literature, and the problems of criticism. He casts a wide net; from Hesiod through Steinbeck and Ogden Nash; and because he is a civilized and unprejudiced observer, he seldom makes mistakes in emphasis.

No critic, however, who starts from the usual time-revered, time-hardened bases of "the best which has been thought and said in the world" (the Western World) can entirely escape some hair- and category-splitting on the one hand and, on the other, some myopia toward the seemingly lesser influences: those straws which not only show how the wind is to blow but, often enough, miraculously come to direct the wind. Dr. Guérard admits in an appendix, for example, the great and international influence of Baudelaire but does not develop this theme in his book. And those periods which produce nothing more challenging than a handful of lyric poems—such as the Carolinian period in England—are likely to get lost in the forward march of "great, best, decisive, epoch-making literature." Dr. Guérard has nothing to say concerning Carew, Waller, Marvell, or even Donne, although he brings in Burns and Landor. He mentions Henry James, in passing, several times, and Yeats twice, without much show of understanding the influence and importance of either. Steinbeck, who certainly belongs in the Dickens tradition, is put down as a satirist. Belonging, as he does, to the French tradition, Dr. Guérard is sound and just in his estimates of the Greek and Latin "classics" and the Gallic line of writing as a whole.

Apart from aiding the lay reader who wishes a guide to general literary "culture," the value of such a book as this is rather limited. For, although the judgments are catholic and there are no attempts at edification, this volume often slides over ground which should, at this late date, be broken up and plumbed. Nineteenth-century scholars labored in the field of comparative literature with extraordinary thorough-

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ness; it is a good thing to have their findings made available to the general reader. But what is needed at present in this field is sensitive, fearless digging into the workings of the spirit behind time, place, and phenomena, analogous to the researches made by Roger Fry in the field of graphic art. The approach should be at once rigorous, courageous, and subtle in order that real discoveries concerning the energy which breaks through "periods," "ages," national tastes, to express now one, now another archetypal pattern of human thought and feeling, may be made. It is the human energy—always unexpected in manifestation and stronger than man's barriers set up to tame it—that is important, no matter what mouthpieces it chooses. We know very little about all this, but we should be willing to learn. LOUISE BOGAN

On the Health of an Old Lady

PARLIAMENT. By W. Ivor Jennings. The Macmillan Company. $6.

FEW man-made institutions have attracted so much admiring attention—and deservedly so—as the British Parliament. It would be a fascinating study to follow its reinterpretation by each succeeding generation, from Grey and Brougham, Bagehot and Gneist, to Dicey, Redlich, and Lowell, and on to Laski and Jennings. Whatever might have been the specific emphasis of the author or of his period, the keynote was positivism, verging almost upon mythology. In our present-day disillusionment we are in a more critical mood toward the perfectibility of the political animal as evidenced by British parliamentary institutions. Dr. Jennings completed his volume before the outbreak of the present war; this writer wants to do him justice now that the war, most directly the supreme test of the British political genius, has been in progress for more than eight months.

Without exaggeration it should be stated that Dr. Jennings's volume is the standard treatise of his generation on the subject. The book should be consulted in conjunction with his previous "Cabinet Government" (1936); to supplement it a third volume, on the party system, is promised by the author. However familiar the reader may be with the subject matter he will not find the treatment dull or academic. And he will be gratified by the extremely fair and judicious disentanglement of controversial topics by the subtle mind of one of England's leading constitutional lawyers.

British parliamentarism is an elaborate and intricate political play, staged by a small élite of political technicians for their own benefit and that of the common man. For the latter it is perhaps as necessary and, in the last analysis, as unsatisfactory as that other play called administration of justice according to law. When we aim at justice we get a dose of consummate law. When we aim at democracy we get it distilled in parliamentary bottles. Observed at closer range and without the magnifying glasses of positivist justification, the British Parliament seems less to reveal political reality than to hide it. The truth is that behind this imposing façade the imponderables of the struggle for economic power are at work, although in a more sophisticated and less brutal manner than we are used to in this country. But in a way it is comforting to American students to read Dr. Jennings's cool unmasking of the pressure groups, lobbies, clubs, and backstairs intrigues in the chapter Who Makes the Law?

And yet, fascinated as the observer is by this spectacle of seemingly effortless machinery, he feels that the positivist approach—and by positivism is meant here as much a value judgment as a method of "descriptive analysis"—is not, cannot be, the last word in appraising a system which carries its fair share of responsibility for bringing the world to the present impasse. This writer, reared in admiration for the English Parliament, has devoted a good deal of his life to gaining a better understanding of the secrets of its success over more than two centuries. Nine years of Tory rule with its incomprehensible failures and shortcomings could not but create in him, and in others for that matter, the impression that political institutions must be judged by their political results. Positivism alone leaves one dissatisfied. James Bryce, in his classic treatise on "Modern Democracies" (1921), deliberately refrained from describing England because he felt that no Englishman was equal to the task of analyzing his own country critically. Perhaps it is presumptuous on the part of a foreigner to demand of an Englishman that he should see the motes in the eyes of his own country, even when they are beams for the eyes of others. But is it really true that the British Parliament is that foremost training ground for political leaders which it is always praised as being? Since 1922 this much-vaunted system of selection has produced four—and only four—Prime Ministers. Are these mediocrities, the Bonar Laws, Baldwins, MacDonalds, and Chamberlains, the best that the machinery could produce in terms of leadership? Our author states: "The result is a system of administration which . . . accords far more closely with public opinion than at any other time in the history of these islands and (it is believed) than in any other country in the world." But we still remember the unequivocal attitude of the public on the Ethiopian affair and the trickery of the 1935 elections, which, flouting public opinion, secured to the Tory rulers a new lease of office—and appeasement.

The reality behind the English pattern of parliamentary government is that a member likes his seat; if he deserts the government, dissolution of Parliament ensues, and he is not sure of reelection. True, this system is compatible with complete freedom of public opinion. But public opinion is filtered through the narrow channels of parliamentary technique, in which the egotism of the members coincides with party interest, party interest coincides with class interest, and class interest is represented as coinciding with public opinion. Thus we are told: "The result is that the British system is very far from the dictatorial system it is sometimes represented to be." Evidently there is more involved than a mere dispute about terminology. Sir Pontius Pilate may well ask, "What is democracy?" Perhaps foreigners do not know much about public opinion in this most enigmatic of peoples.

The "Mother of Parliaments" is an aged lady. This last report of an acknowledged authority testifies to her unabated vigor. The author has not noticed climacteric disturbances and retrogressions. If she survives the present crisis, the dowager may well be in for another long period of health. It would not be the first miracle accomplished by that singular phenomenon called the British Parliament.

KARL LOEWENSTEIN

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Inside the Alcazar

THE BRAVE AND THE BLIND. By Michael Blankfort. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

WITH a preface as startlingly abrupt as a roll of drums Michael Blankfort raises a curtain on the siege of the Alcazar. On the night of July 20, 1936, the Civil Guard, friendly to Franco, was called into the fortress together with all the anti-red citizens in the vicinity of Toledo: men, women, children. The Civil Guard corralled a hundred Loyalist sympathizers as hostages. Franco was on his way from Morocco; the government would be overthrown in a few days, two weeks at the most.

The next morning, without electric power for radio, with all communication save incoming telephone calls cut off, approximately sixteen hundred human beings within the walls of the Alcazar inhabited an isolated world, surrounded by overwhelmingly superior forces, hammered at by artillery, bombs, rifle fire, and insistent propaganda. And the siege went on for a week, two weeks, a month—two months. The garrison, only a small portion of them regular soldiers, had ample ammunition for their rifles and their few machine-guns, but food and water dribbled away until the survivors of bombardment and disease faced a slower, more agonizing death by starvation—provided the mines being drilled under them by Loyalist sappers did not blow them sky-high first. Some deserted, some urged surrender, but Colonel Sanchez, the commandant, steeled his ruthless pride all the more firmly as the seventy-fives nibbled away at the fortress walls.

Mr. Blankfort has done a truly remarkable job: basing his main events on the historical facts of the siege, he peoples the Alcazar entirely with characters imagined by himself. Even Colonel Sanchez is a fictitious personage, though his rejection of his son's plea for surrender was suggested partly by a story told about Colonel Moscardó, the actual commandant. Nevertheless, the few dozen men and women who are brought into sharp focus have the tangible, matter-of-fact reality of next-door neighbors: their hunger, their shrinking from the whine and roar of shells, their sick longing for peace are not mere symbols; they are our hunger, our fears, our wishes.

No less remarkable is the author's unbiased portrayal of the besieged soldiers, civilians, and hostages. Though his sympathies undoubtedly lie with the Loyalists, he is not concerned, like Malraux, with whitewashing them and traducing all Insurgents. Many of the besieged sufferers do not even support Franco; they fight because they revere the traditions of the army, or because they fear the reds will destroy the church, or because—well, because they are brave and blind. Mr. Blankfort depicts without rancor even the stubborn pride of Colonel Sanchez, who committed hundreds to an almost hopeless fight without consulting them, or the fanaticism of Lieutenant Cervantes, who would calmly have sacrificed millions in furtherance of his fascist dream.

Acknowledging courage wherever he finds it, the author has splendidly distilled from his material the essence of terrible, tragic beauty, of bitterly grotesque poetry, that flows when the grapes of wrath are trampled by any aggregation of human beings willing to die for what they sincerely believe to be justice and truth.

LOUIS B. SALOMON

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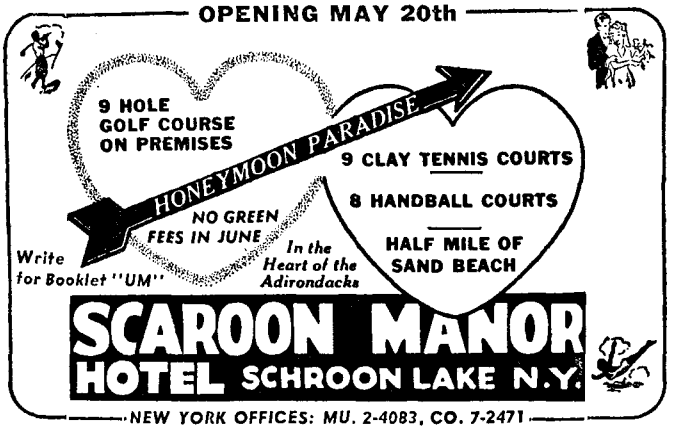
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IN BRIEF

MARIANA. By Sally Salminen. Translated by Barrows Mussey. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

The quiet but extremely lifelike story of a young woman in the Aaland Islands (between Finland and Sweden, in case you haven't been reading the papers): her dreamy years at home, marriage to a farmer, weary struggles with the unaccustomed and back-breaking labors of farm life, and final adjustment. Practically plotless, it is as homespun and convincing as a skillet or a pillowcase.

LOOK BACK ON HAPPINESS. By Knut Hamsun. Translated by Paula Wiking. Coward-McCann. $2.50.

With the curious amalgam of plodding bluntness and dreamy mysticism characteristic of many Scandinavian novels, the dean of Norwegian writers presents a portrait of a lady—a neurotic schoolmistress, twenty-seven years old, entangling herself and several men in the web of her repressions—as seen by an aging author who has not quite achieved such philosophical detachment as would enable him to observe her merely as an interesting case without feeling any of her attraction. While any number of young writers would have run the story up to seven hundred pages with no trouble at all, Mr. Hamsun tells it with compression and vigor; and the writing is permeated with a compound of Norwegian nationalism and Anglophobia that strikes an ironic note in view of the developments of the past few weeks.

CONVERT TO FREEDOM. By Eitel Wolf Dobert. Translated by Heinz and Ruth Norden. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $3.

A post-war German who went abroad as an ardent Nazi to learn how to serve the party in the foreign field and was converted to democratic ideas of freedom writes his autobiography. Read out of the party on his return to Germany, he fled the country and is now in process of becoming an American. The book is a contribution to our understanding of the strength as well as the weakness of Germany.

THE MAD BOOTHS OF MARYLAND. By Stanley Kimmel. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $3.75.

Anyone interested in the English or American stage, the Confederacy, Lincoln, or Americana in general will be rewarded by reading this story of the family which produced the greatest Shakespearean actor of his day and the assassin of Lincoln. Well written and full of information for the most part documented, it belies its catch-penny title.

YOU MIGHT LIKE SOCIALISM. By Corliss Lamont. Modern Age Books. 95 cents.

As a personal testament of a socially prominent young man who has embraced a radical social philosophy, this book is more than just an ordinary apology for socialism. It is also a confession of faith, an indictment of the type of social organization which has been extraordinarily beneficent to him, a program for a planned society, and a spirited defense of the new society evolved in the Soviet Union. Mr. Lamont is most effective in the first and last of these tasks, but his contribution in all four fields is well worth reading. The book is popularly written and should be particularly useful in jolting the mindsets of middle-class individuals whose reading horizons have been bounded by magazines like *Time* and newspapers like the Chicago *Tribune.*

HOUSING IN SCANDINAVIA: URBAN AND RURAL. By John Graham, Jr. University of North Carolina Press. $2.50.

Here is a non-technical account of the solution of the housing problem in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Denmark, and a discussion of the guidance it offers for the development of public housing and resettlement in the United States. It is written from personal observation by a leading American specialist and is provided with pertinent photographs and some plans, especially of rural units. Mr. Graham gives an excellent exposition of the historical, economic, and sociological aspects of the housing problem, but his book would have had greater interest even for the layman if he had developed more fully the technical features of the Scandinavian solution.

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DRAMA

Mr. Saroyan Again

FOR the third time within only a few weeks more than one year William Saroyan has tempted the theatrical fates with a play. The new piece, characteristically entitled "Love's Old Sweet Song," is being offered at the Plymouth by the Theater Guild in conjunction with Eddie Dowling, and it is not, to tell the unfortunate truth, nearly so good as either "My Heart's in the Highlands" or "The Time of Your Life." Quite possibly, however, it may enjoy more financial success than either, and that for the simple reason that audiences now know what to expect from the author. The public, usually rendered restless by what it cannot label, can classify everything in the new piece as "typical Saroyan," and if that is not very illuminating it is soothing to those who find even meaningless labels reassuring. The first-night audience at least seemed amiably disposed to expect the unexpected and to accept it.

The scene of "Love's Old Sweet Song" is Bakersfield, California, but since the plot, unlikely as this may seem, would be more difficult to summarize than that of the author's other plays, I shall indicate only that it involves—conveniently indefinite word—a lonely spinster, an itinerant vendor of a bottled panacea, and a "migratory worker" accompanied by his wife and fourteen children. I shall add that the *deus ex machina* is a Greek wrestler, comfortingly full of the milk of human kindness, at whose home all the difficulties are resolved and twelve of the fourteen children of the migratory worker organized into a medicine-show choir. Finally, just to make it all perfectly clear, I had better tell you that the other two have been recruited by a bawdy house.

To say that the piece is not nearly so good as the author's other dramatic writings is by no means to deny that it is frequently laughable. Whatever the social-minded may think of the taste involved, the satire on the Okies is funny, and the same may be said of the bits concerned with the lady photographer and the novelist who follow them about. The scene in which a subscription agent

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for *Time* turns a recitation of the names of its staff into a kind of rousing oration comes nearer, however, to the spirit of some of the inspired passages of "The Time of Your Life," but only once, I think, does the author write a speech actually as flavorsome as the best in the previous plays, and that is the really glorious soliloquy of the "migratory worker," who has observed for the first time that his eldest daughters have become women and blames this biological phenomenon upon the influence of the movies. As a combination of relevance, irrelevance, and pure poetry that speech is a classic.

The trouble with the piece as a whole is that it lacks the air of spontaneity which characterized the others, that by comparison with them it seems deliberate, mechanical, and trumped up, as though the author were, for the first time, frequently doing only what he thought was expected of him. Many of the incidents are devoid of that air of poetic fantasy that gives its quality to "The Time of Your Life" and suggest merely vaudeville skits or the "blackouts" in a revue. One could hardly claim strict unity of plot as one of the virtues of any of Mr. Saroyan's plays, but the others did exhibit some unity of tone and did move with a recognizable rhythm which gave a continuity to incidents logically unconnected; neither of these qualities is very apparent in "Love's Old Sweet Song," where the movement is irregular and the sequence of events at times seems merely random. Nor does the production, though it includes some admirable performances, escape contributing to the effect of disorganization. Walter Huston as the medicine vendor is ingratiating as he always is; Jessie Royce Landis as the old maid gives a performance which is both one of her best and also one of the most finely tempered that I have ever seen. But there are so many eccentric roles which are perhaps necessarily merely gagged that the whole production takes on an air which sometimes suggests a Gridiron dinner rather more than an honest theatrical performance.

In arguments about Mr. Saroyan's merit or lack of merit as a playwright it has become the custom for his admirers to attribute all the shortcomings of any individual production to the tampering of his producers, while it is equally customary for his detractors to attribute whatever excellences they are compelled to recognize to the same source. "Love's Old Sweet Song" is said to have undergone a good many changes during the staging, and these are said to have included some made at the last minute. Whether the piece is better or worse than it would have been if the author's first version had been followed I cannot pretend to know.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

MUSIC

WHILE records and musical events have claimed all available space in this column books have been stacking up. And readers impatient to know what I think of the book that has been on everyone's tongue will have to bear with me a little longer while I speak first of Tovey's "Essays in Musical Analysis" (Oxford University Press), the concluding volume of which has just appeared. It isn't that I underestimate the occasional shrewd perceptions and amusing performances in the book that is on everyone's tongue, but rather that the qualities of Tovey's writing make his six volumes of program notes for the Reid Orchestra concerts in Edinburgh one of the great classics in music criticism.

"My master, Parry," he writes in this last volume, "taught me to study the classics of music from point to point according to the course of each individual work." Through such examination of the works Tovey has acquired ideas of Haydn's, Mozart's, Beethoven's, Schubert's ways of composing that differ from the generally accepted ideas—those which critics have acquired not from study of the music but from reading each other. He has discovered also that the classical forms as practiced by Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert are different from the classical forms as established in general belief by the theoreticians—"the kind of pedants," as Tovey says of the Viennese musicians who criticized the opening chord-progressions of Beethoven's First Symphony, "who are not even classicists, and whose grammatical knowledge is based on no known language." And these results of his study Tovey has embodied in his writing. I mentioned a while ago the monumental essay on Schubert in the first volume of the Oxford Press "Heritage of Music," in which he cites chapter and verse in Schubert's works to disprove the constantly reiterated fallacies about Schubert; and there are countless examples of this process in "Essays in Musical Analysis." If, for example, you read the description of the form of the Mozart concerto in the booklet recently issued by the New Friends of Music to its subscribers, you should read Tovey's introductory essay on the subject and his further discussions of individual works in Volume III, in which, proceeding from point to point in the music, he corrects the ideas which compilers of handbooks of reference have copied from each other and program annotators have copied out of handbooks of reference.

Tovey acquired, in this way, knowledge enough for any manuscript-grubbing *Professor Doktor*. But operating through his knowledge are the love and enthusiasm and passionate interest and understanding for music that cause him to poke his head in among the notes of a work, that enable him to make musically significant and alive the technical minutiae he discovers, and that give color and warmth to what ordinarily would be cold pedantry. And there are additional significance and color and warmth from his interest and understanding for other things than music; from his personal warmth and high spirits; from his sharp and quick intelligence, which, as it goes along with its chief preoccupation of the moment, darts out in this direction or that at whatever fallacy or stupidity comes within range of its notice; and from the brilliant writing in which these express themselves. I am of course wrong in separating Tovey's understanding of music from his understanding of other things, from his personal warmth, his intelligence; for these are all part of his understanding of music. Cézanne's water color of some tree trunks, Walker Evans's photograph of a Birmingham mill district, the slow movement of Mozart's Concerto K. 467—each represents a sensitiveness to a medium; but involved with this sensitiveness, operating through it, crystallized finally in

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each work of art is emotional and intellectual power—what the man is in feeling, mind, character, what he has experienced, what understanding his experience has given him. And so with the critic: his understanding of each of these works of art begins with a sensitiveness to the medium; but operating through this sensitiveness as part of his understanding, his judgment, his taste, are the qualities of his own mind, feeling, character, his own experience and understanding; and it is when unusual personal qualities of this sort are involved that we are aware of unusual critical insight and taste. The qualities not only are involved in the critic's understanding but are crystallized in his own written criticism; and as against the notion of criticism as a mere parasite on art—which most of it is—there is the fact that important criticism itself has some of the characteristics of artistic expression. That is, it involves the operation of sensibility and intellect and character on its material, the art it deals with, and on its medium, the words in which it formulates itself; in the end, then, it is a type of literary expression with stylistic and aesthetic characteristics that convey qualities of feeling, mind, character precisely as painting or music does; and the term "great" may be applied to a critic—a Berlioz, a Shaw, a Tovey—in the same sense as to a painter or composer.

Tovey writes about what he finds in musical works when he studies them from point to point; and what he writes can be understood only by a reader who already knows the details that Tovey talks about or is able and willing to look them up as Tovey refers to them. The only way to learn anything about Schubert and his music is to go through the music. If one is as good as Tovey one will learn as much in this way as he did; if one is not as good as Tovey one does well to accept the guidance of what he writes about the symphonies in "Essays in Musical Analysis," and to read that essay in "The Heritage of Music" and turn to each song, each sonata, each quartet as he refers to it. To learn about Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and the rest in this way takes effort, takes time, takes the $4 for each slim volume of the "Essays"; and some may prefer to spend a couple of dollars and a couple of hours on the book that is on everyone's tongue. They won't learn anything about Schubert; but they will be amused by the anecdotal revelations of the unattractiveness of orchestral players, conductors, and American composers, among others. For myself, I'll take the music of Schubert and the wit of Tovey.

B. H. HAGGIN

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